SHOPPERS DRUG MART
SEE WHAT'S NEW... CHECK OUT OUR LATEST OFFER ON PAGE 23

It's Easter, I'm taking my day off and I'm going to church. I probably won't see you there.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD, METROVIEW PAGE 18

Vancouver metro

Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2015 | High 11°C /Low 7°C Grey

Happy Holidays!
Your next Metro paper will be on Monday

Chardon-yay

Charlene Donald strolls down the wine aisle with children Tristan, 4, and Journey, 2, at the Save-On-Foods on 152nd Street in Surrey. The grocery store is the first in B.C. to offer local wines on its shelves as sweeping liquor reforms took effect Wednesday. Story, page 7. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

CRIME

Grandpa gets jail time for grow-op

A British Columbia grandfather who started a marijuana grow-op to augment his small pension has been sentenced to six months in jail.

Donald Clarkson, who is 76, pleaded guilty to production of marijuana and possession for the purpose of trafficking after police raided a building on his property two years ago.

Court heard that officers were alerted to a pungent smell coming from Clarkson's rental property in the North Thompson Valley and found 150 small pot plants valued at about $60,000.

Clarkson told a B.C. Supreme Court judge in Kamloops on Monday that he only started the operation because his pension wasn't big enough.

Crown and defence lawyers made a joint submission for the six-month jail term — the minimum sentence after the federal government toughened Canada's drug laws.

Defence lawyer Sheldon Tate told court that Clarkson, a retired trucker, lived a modest life and his only motive was financial gain.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro NEWS
Your essential daily news

It's a 3D-printed hand! Page 15

Marijuana production a budding business in Nanaimo, mayor says

MEDICINE

City approves permit for firm to expand its operations

Neal Hall
For Metro | Vancouver

An employee of Tilray's medical marijuana production plant tends to crops at their Nanaimo facility. COURTESY TILRAY

Nanaimo Mayor Bill McKay said the medical marijuana industry wasn't even on the radar of city officials 10 years ago when they were discussing economic diversification.

But since Tilray, one of Canada's licensed producers of medical cannabis, opened its production plant in Nanaimo in April 2014, it has already contributed millions to the economy and now plans to more than triple the size of the facility, the mayor said.

"It's been a real boon to Nanaimo," McKay said Wednesday.

He said the city has just approved a development permit to allow Tilray to expand its facility to 250,000 square feet from its current 50,000 square feet.

The facility now has 115 employees, with 95 per cent hired locally, and is expected to hire another 275 more when the expansion is finished, the mayor said.

McKay said the economic output of the new facility is expected to be $85 million.

"It's amazing," the mayor said. "Here is a new industry we wouldn't have dreamt of 10 years ago."

McKay said the young people he's talked to who work at the Tilray plant are very pleased with their new jobs.

"We're one of the Top 10 private employers in the region," Tilray CEO Greg Engel said Wednesday. "We've invested more than $25 million."

> **Here is a new industry we wouldn't have dreamt of 10 years ago.**
> Nanaimo Mayor Bill McKay

The company is currently operating at 92 per cent of production capacity at its Nanaimo plant but wants to expand to quadruple production, Engel said, adding Tilray is also looking at potential expansion to Toronto.

Commercial medical marijuana production is one of Canada's fastest growing industries.

Until April of last year, medical marijuana users were allowed to grow their own pot but the government decided that commercial growers should take over the supply, which could be better regulated.

The new law, called the Marihuana for Medical Purposes Regulations, is currently being challenged in Federal Court in Vancouver as being unconstitutional. The case is set for final arguments April 30.

The trial judge earlier granted the plaintiffs an injunction, allowing them to continue growing their own pot until a verdict is reached.

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Pemberton Music Festival 'like a buffet'

ENTERTAINMENT

Kendrick Lamar, the Black Keys to headline

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

After weeks of anticipation and fervent speculation from fans, Pemberton Music Festival finally unveiled its 2015 lineup on Wednesday.

Kendrick Lamar, the Black Keys, J. Cole and Tiësto will be headlining the annual event, which takes place July 16 to July 19.

Big name artists like Hozier, Kid Cudi, Missy Elliott, Weezer and Jane's Addiction will also be taking to the stage.

Packed with more than 70 acts, the four-day festival features a diverse mix of music, from Passion Pit to M.I.A., Billy Talent, Sam Roberts Band, the Decemberists, the War on Drugs and Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros.

There's even a dash of jazz thrown in there, with New Orleans' Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

"That's something that's been our style really since the first festival," said A.J. Niland, founder of HUKA Entertainment, the New Orleans-based concert promoter behind the annual festival. "It's like a buffet. We try to look at every festival as if you're trying to satisfy every taste."

This is the second year HUKA Entertainment has organized the event.

Last year's festival was marred by the death of a 21-year-old Regina man who was found dead in one of the campgrounds.

Foul play was ruled out as a cause of death.

> **We want a good experience but we want people safe and that's really the centre of it all**
> A.J. Niland, founder of HUKA Entertainment

Describing the death as "terrible," Niland said it's become an unfortunate reality for many music festivals where the "sheer volume of people" coming together simply increases the odds that an accident might happen.

Although he said the company was "spot on" with its safety preparations last year, Niland said it is taking extra steps this year to help prevent similar incidents from happening again.

"We're going to provide some amnesty and some safe places for folks to get help and just make that more visible," he said. "We want a good experience but we want people safe and that's really the centre of it all."

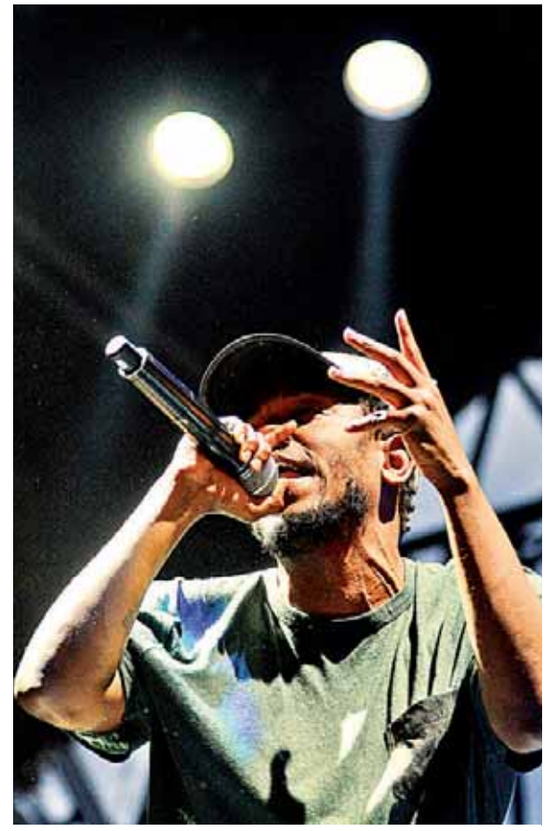
Also new to this year's festival is a drop from five stages to four, a decision Niland said was based on trying to reduce "sound bleed" between stages.

Organizers are also adding premium camping to take advantage of a new portion of land that wasn't available last year, he said.

Advance weekend general admission tickets go on sale 10 a.m. Friday at $279, plus a choice of camping or shuttle privileges for $89 or $29 for a Go Green Pass, which are in limited supply.

EVENT

The Pemberton Music Festival takes place July 16 to July 19.



Kendrick Lamar performs at last year's festival. The rapper is headlining this year. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

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Sears

IN BRIEF

Merritt relieved after infamous house razed

An ugly reminder of the murders of three children has finally been demolished — seven years after the heinous crime rocked the Interior community of Merritt, B.C.

On Wednesday, an excavator rolled off the property and a truck hauled away debris, leaving the place where kids once ran free barren of a residence.

In April 2008, Allan Schoenborn killed his 10-year-old daughter Kaitlynne and his sons — eight-year-old Max and five-year-old Cordon.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Shots fired from one vehicle at another

Police are investigating after witnesses reported that a man in one vehicle was firing shots at another vehicle while both were rolling through an intersection in Surrey, B.C., Wednesday morning.

Police don't know if any of the drivers or passengers in the vehicles were hurt in the shooting.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Interim lottery CEO and president promoted

The man who was handed interim reins of the British Columbia Lottery Corporation after the resignation of its former leader has been named its president and chief executive officer.

Jim Lightbody has been working in the position at the Crown corporation since his appointment in January 2014.

Lightbody has worked for the corporation for the past 14 years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Claimants a bunch of do-gooders: Lawyer

COURT

Mayor's rep questions validity of suit against him

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

The lawsuit vying to oust Mayor Gregor Robertson and Coun. Geoff Meggs from office was filed by "do-gooders" and is a waste of time and resources, the politicians' lawyer argued in B.C. Supreme Court on Wednesday.

Five citizens, including Randy Helten, a blogger who is critical of Vision Vancouver, filed the petition alleging conflict of interest over a $34,000 donation to Vision from CUPE 1004 after Meggs made a pitch for the union's support at a members-only meeting during the 2014 election campaign.

The Vision politicians' lawyer Bryan Baynham called the petitioners "a bunch of do-good citizens who think their views are more important than the electorate" that voted for Robertson and Meggs even after the union donation made headlines.

Baynham argued the petition is "ill conceived" and "improper" because it relies on an audio recording leaked to a reporter that has been edited and only accounts for a small portion of the meeting.

He questioned the validity of the audio and suggested its release might have been part of the Non-Partisan Association's campaign.

Mayor Gregor Robertson and Coun. Geoff Meggs at VCC-Clark Station during the 2014 election campaign. Five citizens have filed a petition to get the pair booted from office. METRO FILE

Nevertheless, Judge Elliott Myers ruled he would consider the audio when making his judgment since Meggs confirmed the audio accurately reflected what he said.

Baynham then argued the conflict accusations are "at best premature" because the union's contract doesn't expire until the end of the year, so Meggs and Robertson haven't acted on the alleged conflict in negotiations.

Finally, he argued Meggs' words did not amount to conflict because there was no quid pro quo.

"He's doing nothing more than stating the longstanding policy of Vision to support the union movement generally," he said.

> **(The petitioners are) a bunch of do-good citizens who think their views are more important than the electorate.**
> Lawyer Bryan Baynham

The petitioners' lawyer David Wotherspoon said it was insulting to call the petitioners do-gooders. He maintained that Meggs' words, spoken at a meeting to ask for support, amounted to a specific promise to do new things to help the union in the future and that accepting the donation afterward amounts to conflict.

"He will handcuff the city in future negotiations," Wotherspoon said.

While skyrocketing campaign donations and spending in Vancouver have prompted calls for reform, it is legal for politicians to make campaign promises, accept donations and then vote on proposals that affect the donors.

A decision is expected within the next month.

TRANSIT PLEBISCITE

Very few ballots counted

Only 4.1 per cent of registered voters in Metro Vancouver have had their ballots counted in the transit plebiscite thus far, according to Elections B.C. data released Wednesday.

Although that seems like a tiny return rate, it's still early days in the plebiscite on whether to approve a 0.5 per cent regional sales tax to help pay for the mayors' $7.5-billion transit plan.

Elections B.C. officials had only processed ballots from Vancouver and Surrey as of April 1.

In the two weeks since residents started receiving their mail-in voting packages, 13.1 per cent of Vancouverites and 3.1 per cent of Surrey residents have cast their ballots.

Both municipalities are vying for major investments to build the Broadway subway in Vancouver and two light rail transit (LRT) lines in Surrey.

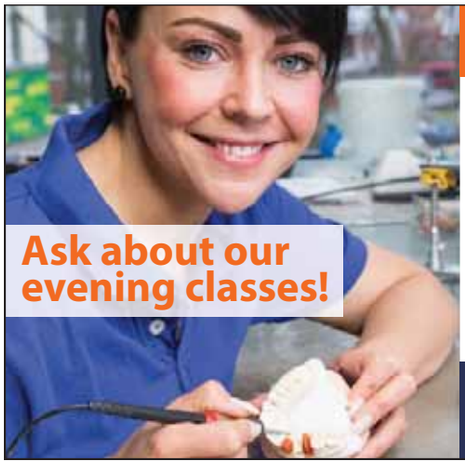
Voters have until May 29 to cast their ballots and until May 15 to register to vote and request a voting package.

Canadian citizens who are 18 or older as of May 29, live in Metro Vancouver and have been B.C. residents for at least six months are eligible to vote.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

13.1%

The percentage of Vancouverites who have cast their ballots in the transit plebiscite so far.



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EMPLOYMENT

Dream job alert: Get paid to hike, canoe and camp across Canada this summer

You might want to quit your job after reading this.

Outdoor gear company Woods Canada is hiring two people to take a five-month trip across Canada this summer and document their adventures hiking, swimming, canoeing and climbing along the way.

Each person will be paid $20,000 plus all travel costs, accommodations, food and a full Woods wardrobe.

They will travel as a team along the Trans Canada Trail and work six days a week from May 12 until Sept. 30. Those worried about tenting with a total stranger for five months can apply in pairs.

They will be expected to use Woods products — including tents, backpacks and fishing gear — and share their photographs, videos, journals and advice online.

$20K

Each person will be paid $20,000 plus travel costs, accommodations and food.

The #DreamJob competition, as Woods calls it, appears to jump on the social media marketing trend aiming to capitalize on Millennials' obsession with Instagram, Snapchat and all things visual. Companies are increasingly giving their products to influential Instagrammers in a bid to grab audiences. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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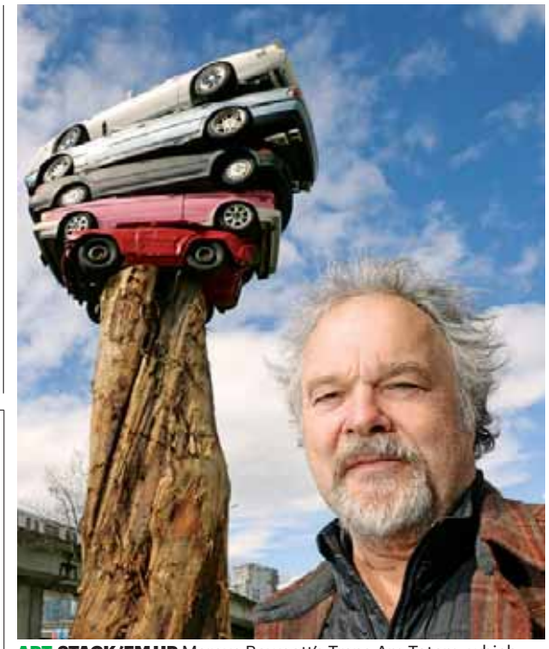

ART STACK 'EM UP Marcus Bowcott's Trans Am Totem, which features an old-growth cedar tree base holding up four cars with a gleaming Trans Am at the top, was installed beside the SkyTrain line at Quebec Street and Milross Avenue this week. The installation is part of the Vancouver Biennale. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Police seize guns, cash, cars in bust

CRIME

Downtown Eastside probe yields 11 arrests

Vancouver police have rounded up almost a dozen people, seized $575,000 cash, $1.8 million worth of drugs and a dozen guns after an investigation aimed at drug dealers in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Vancouver police Supt. Mike Porteous said Wednesday the crime group was supplying crack cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and fentanyl to vulnerable people in the city's poorest neighbourhood.

Police also believe the group was shipping large quantities of drugs to Vancouver Island and Alberta.

"These individuals are known to police quite well," Porteous told reporters during a news conference that displayed drugs and guns seized during the operation, code named Project Trooper.

On March 11, the Vancouver Police Organized Crime Section executed 11 search warrants in Vancouver, New Westminster, Coquitlam, Surrey and Maple Ridge; 11 people were arrested for drugs and weapons offences.

Porteous said 40 officers were involved in the investigation and more than 100 took part in executing search warrants, with the assistance of various police departments, the RCMP and the Federal Serious Organized Crime section.

"We have a common goal, and that is to target violent and dangerous criminals and take them off the street," Porteous said of the co-operation between agencies.

Police seized eight vehicles, mainly SUVs, including four that had secret compartments for transporting drugs.

The drugs seized: 20.5 kilograms of cocaine, 1.6 kg of heroin, 12.2 kilograms of methamphetamine, 23,000 fentanyl pills and 228 kg of phenacetin.

The investigation came after an earlier probe into fentanyl, which continues to show up in liquids, powders and pills, and can be masked in virtually any consumable product.

Fentanyl-laced heroin, oxycodone and other party drugs have recently resulted in the deaths of drug users.

NEAL HALL/FOR METRO

Save-on-Foods in South Surrey starts selling wine

LIQUOR LAWS

Registers must be staffed by workers older than 19

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

Sweeping changes to B.C.'s liquor laws came into effect Wednesday, with a grocery store in South Surrey becoming the first in the province to stock and sell wine.

Save-on-Foods on 152nd Street in Surrey opened its "locally crafted wines" section on Wednesday, making it the first and only grocery store in the province currently selling liquor.

"This really is a milestone event for British Columbia's progress in modernizing our liquor laws," Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton said at a news conference where the wine shelves were unveiled. "Today marks the first day we have opened up the market to change."

The Save-on-Foods location takes advantage of the provincial government's new "B.C. wine-on-shelves model." Under the model, the grocery store can sell wine at any of the tills, but they must be staffed by a cashier who is over the age of 19 and trained in Serving it Right.

While she couldn't offer a timeline of when more grocery stores will offer wine under the model, Anton said she expects it will be soon.

"There certainly appears to be some very significant customer demand for that to happen," she told reporters.

Save-on-Foods partnered with the B.C. Wine Institute, which holds the wine licence, to be able to sell wine in its South Surrey location.

"There are almost 100 B.C. wineries represented on the grocery store shelves here today, and there are about 500 different wines to choose from," Anton said.

A series of other liquor law changes came into effect Wednesday, including a "store within a store" model, which will allow the sale of other alcoholic products, like spirits. None are operating yet in B.C.

Under the new regulations, all liquor retailers, including BC Liquor Stores, will also purchase their alcohol at the same price under a new wholesale model.

Despite fears that this would result in a jump in prices, the B.C. Liquor Distribution Branch said most product prices at B.C. liquor stores stayed more or less the same Wednesday.

"Customers won't be seeing much, if any, change on their receipts today," a spokesperson for the distribution branch wrote in an email.

BC Liquor Stores will also begin rolling out extended operating hours and Sunday openings, as well as refrigeration. Previously, chilled beer and wine was limited to private liquor stores and BC Liquor signature stores.

Surrey resident Barry Orr was shopping for coffee at Save-on-Foods on Wednesday when he came across the wine aisles.

"It's fantastic," he said. "It's convenient coming here, getting the groceries and buying a bottle of wine at the same time. I think it's a great idea. It's long past due."

Surrey resident Barry Orr eyes a bottle of wine at Save-on-Foods in South Surrey on Wednesday. It is the first and only grocery store so far to sell liquor. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

TOURISM

Canada tries to woo U.S.

Canada is expanding its tourism focus towards the United States 14 years after 9/11 chilled American travel northward.

Tourism Minister Maxime Bernier was in Vancouver Wednesday and said that the timing is right to entice more U.S. travellers to come to Canada.

"One factor is the situation of the Canadian dollar. That will help to convince Americans to come here to Canada," he told a crowd of reporters as he announced the results of a strong 2014 tourism year.

More than 17.1 million international tourists came to Canada last year. During the same period, Canada saw an increase of overnight arrivals by over 10 per cent from countries around the world.

Total tourism spending in Canada was estimated at $88.5 billion in 2014.

Bernier said the Canadian Tourism Commission, a Crown corporation that markets Canada globally as a year-round tourist destination, has been instrumental in improving tourism to Canada.

"All the markets where the CTC is investing, there's a growth of 11 per cent," the minister said. "So it is why we want the CTC to reinvest in the U.S. market, because there's a big potential there for the tourism industry."

Bernier said he hoped to see more funding allotted to tourism in the next federal budget, due next month.

Canadian Tourism Commission president David Goldstein said when the border between Canada and the U.S. "thickened" after the 9/11 terror attacks, trips to Canada fell by a third.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Graeme McRanor
Metro | Vancouver

Brazilian dancers step to the Playhouse

What do you get when you take 11 dancers from the slums of Brazil, four choreographers with varying styles and a French-Algerian artistic director with a vast knowledge of hip-hop?

Well, I don't entirely know — but it sounds pretty cool.

It's called Käfig Brasil and it's coming to the Vancouver Playhouse this month.

Here's the breakdown: Four renowned choreographers — each give the dancers a different theme/style: there's ecstasy and abandonment, poetry, humour, hip-hop and Capoeira, the Brazilian martial art.

There's also a fifth piece that's been choreographed by the dancers themselves.

And it's all set to music ranging from Vivaldi to Deadmau5.

Presented April 11 and 12 by Dancehouse, Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marnes, and Compagnie Käfig. Artistic director is Mourad Merzouki. Choreographed by Anthony Egéa, Céline Lefèvre, Denis Plassard, Octavio Nassur, and Campagnie Käfig.

Tickets start at $35; show at 8 p.m.

Visit Dancehouse.ca for more information.

A bold piece of Pi

Blasted got blasted by the critics as a "feast of filth" when it first hit the stage in London back in 1995, but the provocative play has become rather iconic — even if it hasn't been mounted often in Canada (Pi Theatre's upcoming run is only the second professional production of the play here).

"Two decades after its premiere, [it] seems more at home in the present than it was at the time of its writing," says Pi's artistic director Richard Wolfe.

"Scenes that were thought of [then] as exaggerated to the point of absurdity have taken on uncomfortable familiarity in the face of events of today."

Check out this intense, ground-breaking play at Performance Works on Granville Island from April 10 - 25.

Visit PiTheatre.com for more information.

Käfig Brasil, a troupe of dancers from Brazil, is at the Vancouver Playhouse April 10 and 11. MICHEL CAVALCA/CONTRIBUTED

Royal flush

She coined the phrase "You can never be too rich or too thin" and seduced a king.

The Duchess, a play about Wallis Simpson, the American divorcee for whom Edward VIII gave up the throne, sees 10 local actors in 36 roles.

The play is at the Historic Theatre at The Cultch from April 7 to 12.

Tickets start at $19. More info at TheCultch.com.

BACKSTAGE PASS

At 84, William Shatner still boldly goes wherever he wants

There are a few constants in William Shatner's career: he will always be working, he will always be mocked — not least by himself — and he will always be James T. Kirk, captain of the Starship Enterprise.

Those are the reasons why Shatner is appearing this weekend at Vancouver Fan Expo, a three-day gathering at the city's convention centre for fans of comics, sci-fi, horror, anime, gaming and the people who make that pop culture.

It's one of "two or three — very few" such shows Shatner said he chooses to attend in a year.

Shatner said in telephone interview from Los Angeles that he continues to attend the events because he encounters constant reminders of the relevance of Star Trek.

William Shatner in 2014. ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

In a recent example, his driver suddenly stopped on the way to the airport to tell Shatner about being tortured as a prisoner of war.

"The only way he kept alive was remembering words that I had said in the part of Captain Kirk," he said.

The series originally ran for three seasons from 1966 to 1969 before NBC cancelled it because of low ratings.

It became a cult classic in the 1970s because of constant syndication reruns, which led to movies, beginning with Star Trek: The Motion Picture in 1979.

Those reruns also provided comedians with fodder for mocking impressions of Shatner as Kirk, often so exaggerated that he didn't recognize himself.

"I'd have to say, 'Who are they doing?' in the beginning. Now I realize they're doing me, so I can put that on and play with that," he said. "But what seems to have happened is everybody's grasped the idea that I'm trying my best."

He said some of his performing quirks, including his stilted dialogue as the captain, came from memorizing pages and pages of lines.

Experiences like that and his encounter with the driver are the basis for an autobiographical one-man show, Shatner's World, that toured Australia and Canada in 2011.

Touring Canada renewed the Montreal native's appreciation for the country, he said. "I've been from one end of the country to the other in the last couple of years in a way that not many people do, except for soap salesmen," he said. "And I've seen Canada in all its fresh, glorious beauty."

> **"I've been from one end of the country to the other**
> William Shatner

Shatner's World ran on Broadway in 2012 and he continues performing the show.

"It became a show that had as its thrust the desire to work and say yes to opportunities either professionally or personally and the concept of grasping life and making it work for you as best you can in the limited time we have."

At 84, Shatner continues to say yes, including recently completing four episodes on the supernatural series Haven.

"I just finished a show in Halifax in which I had many, many long speeches," he said.

"I thought, 'This is going to be an interesting test to see what my memory's like.' I had no problems whatsoever."

He described his health as "superb."

Shatner said in the past weekend, he had ridden five American Saddlebred horses — he raises the animals — competing against a field of a hundred that included 18-year-old riders and came away with nine blue ribbons.

"Why in God's name would you retire when I feel like I'm just discovering how to do it all?"

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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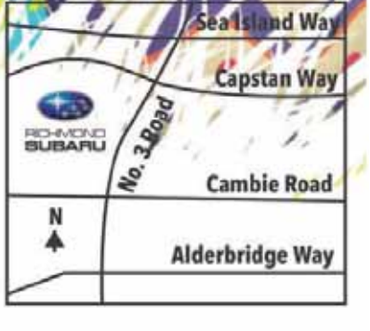

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IN BRIEF

Quebec to continue to support Badawi despite ambassador's criticism

Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Canada is telling Quebec politicians his government won't accept meddling in its internal affairs in response to the case of a jailed blogger.

The ambassador sent a letter addressed to the speaker of the national assembly regarding Raif Badawi, saying his government expresses "its strong surprise and dismay" at what is being said and written about the case.

The March 10 letter was also sent to the federal government and is critical of attacks by media and international agencies on Saudi Arabia's human-rights record.

"(The kingdom) does not accept any form of interference in its internal affairs and rejects the encroachment on its sovereign right or the compromising of its judiciary independence and integrity," writes Naif Bin Bandir AlSudairy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fahmy shocked at Ottawa's refusal to issue passport

A Canadian journalist on trial in Egypt on widely denounced terror charges expressed shock and anger Wednesday over Ottawa's refusal to issue him a passport while he awaits the outcome of his case. Mohamed Fahmy, who spent more than a year in a Cairo prison, has been trying to acquire a new passport ever since being released on bail in February.

"I am crippled, and it's becoming a security threat that I'm walking around with no Canadian passport," he said in an interview from Cairo. "I don't know what to do anymore."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sen. Nancy Ruth speaks at a news conference in Ottawa on Dec. 16, 2010. Ruth is miffed that she's being asked to justify claiming a meal expense while travelling when she could have eaten a free airline breakfast. SEAN KILPATRICK /THE CANADIAN PRESS

Senator displeased with audit process

POLITICS

Most questions too simple, not relevant, says Nancy Ruth

Conservative Sen. Nancy Ruth appears to have little faith in the ability of the auditor general to figure out whether she and her colleagues were inappropriately billing taxpayers for expenses.

"Most of their questions were not very sophisticated, nor do they really have anything to do with Senate business," she told reporters Wednesday morning about her experience having employees for the federal watchdog comb through her travel expense claims as part of a large-scale forensic investigation into Senate reimbursements.

"There are a couple of times when my assistant put in for a breakfast when I was on a plane, and they say I should not claim because I should have eaten that breakfast. Well, those (free) breakfasts are pretty awful. If you want ice-cold Camembert with broken crackers …" Nancy Ruth said.

"I just don't think they understand anything of what it's like to fly around the world to get here. They just don't know," she said.

> **"Those (free) breakfasts are pretty awful …**
> Sen. Nancy Ruth

The Conservative senator for Ontario was responding to a report by CTV News on Tuesday night that dozens of senators have received letters from the Office of the Auditor General asking them to account for questionable claims.

A source confirmed to Torstar News Service on Wednesday that at least 44 senators have received such letters and that one of them is former Liberal senator Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, who was asked to explain some $100,000 in claims.

CTV News also said at least one senator has already paid back a claim flagged by auditors.

NDP MP Charlie Angus, the ethics critic for his party, dismissed the notion that the auditor general is being too strict by questioning senators over why they claimed per-diems for meals they could have eaten free on airplanes as well as at receptions and other Senate-related gatherings.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The coast guard says the Ann Harvey struck a rocky shoal on Wednesday southwest of Burgeo, N.L., but the crew of 26 on board is safe. CANADIAN COAST GUARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ship hits bottom near coast of N.L.

ACCIDENT

Icebreaker took on some water, but no one was injured

The coast guard plans to take some non-essential personnel off the icebreaker Ann Harvey, which struck a rocky shoal Wednesday morning and punctured its hull off the coast of southwest Newfoundland.

Coast guard Capt. Jim Chmiel said the ship is anchored nine kilometres southwest of Burgeo and is not in danger of sinking.

No injuries were reported among the 26 crew members and two cadets who were on board. The coast guard says in a statement that all personnel were safe.

Chmiel said it plans to remove the two cadets and as many as four non-essential crew members from the Ann Harvey.

The other crew members will remain on board the ship as it waits for the arrival of the Canadian Coast Guard Ship Louis S. St-Laurent, which will tow it to a sheltered harbour for repairs, said Chmiel, the superintendent of the coast guard's regional operations centre.

The ship took on water in the propulsion motor room and two electrical motors are damaged, he said. Pumps were keeping up with the flow of water coming into the damaged compartments and Chmiel said the situation was "stabilized" early Wednesday evening.

"The water is not rising any more and the (pumps) are keeping up to the inflow of water," he said. "We're just waiting for a large ship to tow it away to a safe haven."

There was no marine pollution from the incident, said Chmiel.

The coast guard said it is coordinating its efforts with the military's Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Halifax.

Once the Louis S. St-Laurent arrives, it will be on standby until another ship, the Teleost, arrives around noon on Thursday to assist in the operation.

The coast guard said the weather in the area is good, with northwest winds forecast to be 35 kilometres an hour overnight. It says the winds are favourable to the ship's position.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DETAILS

The Ann Harvey was built in Halifax in 1987 and can carry 47 people.

ARTIFACTS

Terry Fox exhibit opens at Canadian Museum of History

An exhibit of artifacts from Terry Fox's epic Marathon of Hope is opening Thursday at the Canadian Museum of History.

It's the first time the archival materials have been on display in one location. The displays — including Fox's artificial leg and the van that followed him along the 5,373 kilometre route that he took in 1980 to raise money for cancer — have been assembled to mark the 35th anniversary of the run.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

HEALTH

Phase 1 trials suggest Ebola vaccine is safe

The first human trials of a designed-in-Canada Ebola vaccine suggest it is safe and triggers a rapid immune response, studies published Wednesday reveal.

The work, based on six different clinical trials in the United States, Switzerland, Germany, Gabon and Kenya, found the vaccine quickly generates antibodies in people who receive it. Whether those antibodies protect against infection remains to be seen, but early evidence suggests that is a strong possibility.

The vaccine is called rVSV-ZEBOV and was designed by scientists at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg. It is being developed by U.S. biotech NewLink Genetics and pharma giant Merck.

Published in the New England Journal of Medicine, the research describes Phase 1 clinical trials and shows time what happens when this vaccine is given to a number of people. But Phase 1 trials are too small to answer the question: Does this vaccine work? It is hoped the answer will come from larger Phase 3 trials currently underway in West Africa.

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JOBS

Clock runs out for thousands of temporary foreign workers

Mario Reyes choked back tears on Wednesday while discussing his last-ditch attempt to remain in Canada as the clock ran out for thousands of temporary foreign workers like him whose work permits have expired.

Reyes, who came to Canada from the Philippines seven years ago, has been working at a Minit Lube franchise in Red Deer, Alta., as a temporary foreign worker. He’s now facing the reality that he will soon have to return home.

“When I was in the Philippines, life was really hard for me, but when I got a chance to work here everything changed,” said Reyes at his lawyer’s office in Calgary.

“I was able to send my kids to school because life in the Philippines is hard. If I go back to the Philippines, my girls cannot finish their studies and it’s going to break their hearts.”

Reyes turns 48 later this month. His application for permanent residency, filed last November, has been rejected and his hopes of eventually becoming a Canadian citizen are in jeopardy.

Lawyer Peter Wong, left, discusses the case of Mario Reyes, right, a temporary foreign worker living in Red Deer, Alta., Wednesday in Calgary. Reyes’ work permit has expired and he is faced with returning home. MIKE RIDEWOOD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

“It’s Canadian first; I understand,” said Reyes. “It’s Canadian first, but I deserve to stay. I pay my taxes, I work hard, I do not break the law. I deserve to be a Canadian or at least a permanent resident.”

In 2011, the Conservative government set April 1, 2015, as the deadline for temporary foreign workers in low-skilled jobs to either become permanent residents or return home.

In Alberta alone, 10,000 temporary foreign workers have applied to stay in Canada.

Immigration Canada hasn’t divulged the total number of workers who now must leave, but immigration and labour market experts have estimated tens of thousands are affected.

Peter Wong, Reyes’ lawyer, said he represents more than 30 workers in similar circumstances.

Wong is trying to buy them some time in the hope that government officials will issue what he calls a “rare exception.”

“There are lots of what I would call very desperate attempts to remain in Canada after that April 1 deadline,” Wong said. “Some will work. The vast majority will not and that’s the sad reality.”

In Ottawa, Employment Minister Pierre Poilievre defended the government’s position.

“Our policy is that Canadians should come first for Canadian jobs,” Poilievre told reporters.

“The April 1st deadline has been known for a very long time and the purpose of the program is for it to be temporary. That’s why they’re called temporary foreign workers.”

Businesses should raise wages and hire Canadians if they’re struggling to fill positions, he added.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DRUG DEAL

Canadian diplomat’s son shot in Miami

One teenage son of a Canadian diplomat was killed and a younger son is under arrest after they were involved in an alleged drug deal that turned into a gun battle, according to Miami police records and the diplomat’s ex-husband.

Germano Wabafiyebazu said Wednesday his 17-year-old son, Jean, was killed when he went into a house to buy marijuana, and that police arrested his 15-year-old son.

Wabafiyebazu was formerly married to the boys’ mother, Canadian consul general Roxanne Dubé.

The 15-year-old faces charges of threatening a police officer while in custody, according to a separate police report. That report also briefly refers to a gunfight in which Jean Wabafiyebazu was killed.

Germano Wabafiyebazu said his sons borrowed their mother’s personal vehicle which has diplomatic licence plates, to drive to the house but told their mother they were just going for a drive. .

Dubé started her job as consul general in Miami in February. She was previously Canada’s ambassador to Zimbabwe from 2005 to 2008.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CRIME

Mounties dismantle Canada-wide prostitution ring

As many as 500 Asian women were allegedly smuggled into the country to take part in a Canada-wide prostitution ring the RCMP says it has dismantled. Federal authorities announced Wednesday they’d struck against two major cells of the network in the last five days and arrested six people in the greater Montreal and Toronto areas. The accused are allegedly part of an Asian-based organized crime ring that operated bawdy houses in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

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Trial to focus on online bullying

SAN JOSE, CALIF.

Opening statements expected to start next week

A 15-year-old girl committed suicide a week after three classmates photographed themselves sexually assaulting her at a 2012 party, petrified the boys would circulate the photos online and believing gossip about her was spreading widely.

Audrie Pott's story has captivated those concerned with teen bullying, which appears to be on the rise with the help of smartphones and social media but rarely ends in suicide.

A wrongful-death trial this month in San Jose, Calif., will determine whether bullying played a role in the girl's death. Lawyers were to argue Wednesday over what evidence the jury will hear, while opening statements are expected to start next week.

The three boys, now high-school seniors, and other teens are expected to deliver uncomfortable and emotional testimony about the party where Audrie was sexually assaulted after passing out drunk and other events leading up to her death.

Sheila Pott with a portrait of her daughter Audrie in Los Altos, Calif. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Parry Aftab, a digital-privacy lawyer, said Audrie's death likely will be discussed at an international anti-bullying conference in Ireland in May that she's helping organize.

"Depending on what the jury decides, the kids will look at this and see there may be consequences," Aftab said.

Audrie's parents say the assault and fear of online ridicule caused her death and they have pursued a wrongful-death lawsuit against the boys, their families and others for three years that will culminate with the three-week trial.

Her parents say they want to hold the boys responsible and call attention to bullying, social-media shaming and teen suicide. One of the three teens told attorneys that in the weeks before Audrie's death, the trio swapped racy selfies of girls they badgered into taking the photos.

> **"Depending on what the jury decides, the kids will look at this and see there may be consequences."**
> Parry Aftab, digital-privacy lawyer

That boy and his family recently apologized to the Pott family and settled their portion of the case for an amount of money a judge has ordered be kept confidential. But the other two teens insist they weren't responsible for Audrie's death.

The Pott family's lawyer said that the "majority" of proceeds from the lawsuit will be donated to the Audrie Pott Foundation and used to lobby for anti-bullying laws.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Egypt, Nigeria led world in 2014 death sentences

Egypt and Nigeria accounted for well over 1,000 of the death sentences announced last year, more than a third of the world's total, Amnesty International says in its latest annual report on the death penalty. The human-rights group expressed alarm at the 28 per cent jump in death sentences: 2,466 people in 55 countries were condemned to death in 2014.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New president vows to hunt Boko Haram

Nigerians celebrated Muhammadu Buhari's victory in presidential elections Wednesday, but sobering challenges confront their new leader: from an Islamic uprising to widespread poverty. Buhari, 72, made history in Africa's most populous country as the first opposition candidate to win elections, defeating President Goodluck Jonathan. Buhari warned Boko Haram insurgents he'd be coming after them.

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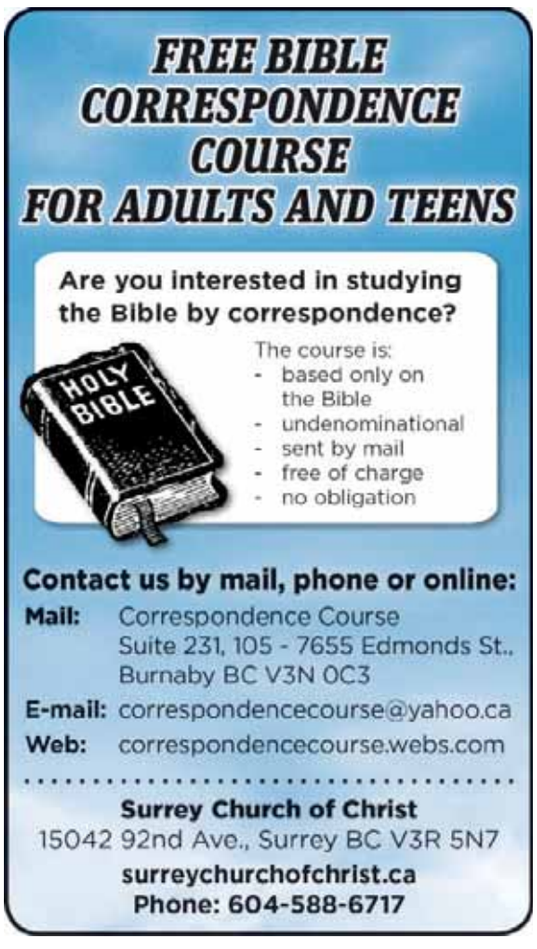
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YEMEN SAUDI-LED AIRSTRIKES TARGET SHIITE REBELS ACROSS YEMEN; 35 WORKERS KILLED A Houthi Shiite rebel carries his weapon as he joins others to protest against Saudi-led airstrikes, during a rally in Sanaa, Yemen, Wednesday. Saudi-led coalition warplanes bombed Shiite rebel positions in both north and south Yemen early Wednesday, setting off explosions and drawing return fire from anti-aircraft guns. HANI MOHAMMED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fire engulfs Mexican oil rig; 4 workers dead

OFFSHORE DISASTER

No evidence yet of major spill: Pemex

A massive ball of flames engulfed an oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday, killing four people and sending terrified workers jumping into the sea.

State-run oil company Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, said there was no evidence yet of a major oil spill following the blast, which injured 16 workers, two seriously, and forced the evacuation of 300.

Fleets of helicopters ferried workers with bandaged hands and faces, and burn marks on their overalls to the nearby city of Ciudad del Carmen, where crowds of concerned relatives of oil workers thronged outside hospitals.

A survivor of the blaze on the shallow-water Abkatun Permanente platform in the Campeche Sound said workers "jumped into the sea out of desperation and panic."

"There was nothing you could do but run," said Roger Arias Sanchez, an employee of Pemex contractor Cotemar who escaped the burning platform in an evacuation boat.

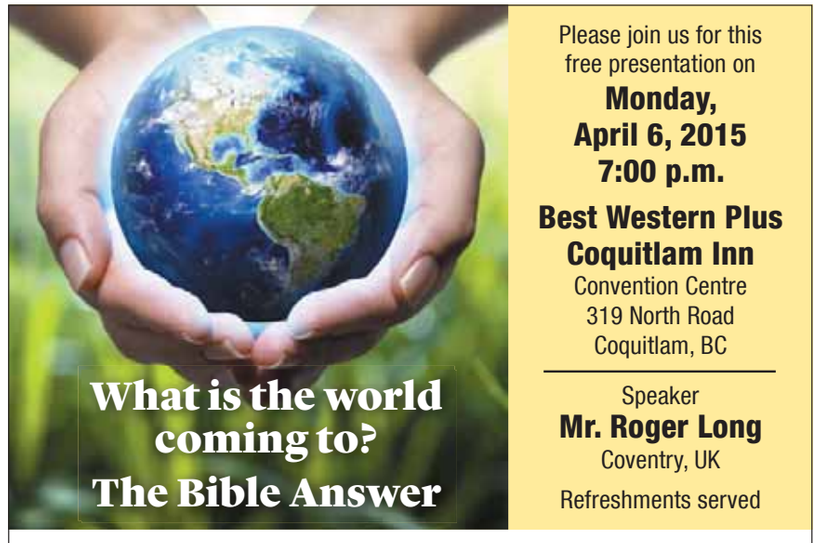
Eight firefighting boats were trying to extinguish the fire, said Pemex. Mexico's Energy Security Agency said the fire "is being extinguished."

President Enrique Pena Nieto said the causes of the accident are under investigation.

Pena said he had issued orders "to carry out the appropriate investigations to find whoever is responsible, but above all, to avoid this type of accident in the future."

On its Twitter account Wednesday afternoon, Pemex raised the death toll from one to four. Many of the injured appeared to be Cotemar employees.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



ISIL

Iraq declares victory in Tikrit

The government declared victory in Tikrit on Wednesday over ISIL extremists, and it warned the militants holding other Iraqi provinces that they would be the next to fall.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi walked triumphantly along a street in Tikrit, carrying an Iraqi flag and surrounded by jubilant forces.

Across the border in Syria, however, ISIL fighters made their deepest foray yet into the capital of Damascus by infiltrating a Palestinian refugee camp, according to opposition activists and Palestinian officials.

Iraq's victory over the extremists in Tikrit was seen as a key step toward eventually driving the militants out of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city and the capital of Nineveh province.

Defence Minister Khalid al-Obeidi announced the victory, saying security forces have "accomplished their mission" in the monthlong offensive to rid Saddam Hussein's hometown and the broader Salahuddin province of the militant group.

"We have the pleasure, with all our pride, to announce the good news of a magnificent victory," Obeidi said in a video statement, and he named the other Iraqi provinces still being held by ISIL militants.

"Here we come to you, Anbar! Here we come to you, Nineveh, and we say it with full resolution, confidence, and persistence," he said.

Al-Abadi said that military engineering units still need more time to clear Tikrit of booby traps and looked to the next steps for the city and province.

"God willing, there will be a fund to rebuild areas destroyed by Daesh and the war. Tikrit and Salahuddin areas will be covered by this fund," al-Abadi said, using the Arabic acronym for ISIL.

The extremists seized Tikrit last summer during its advance out of Syria and across northern and western Iraq.

Iraqi forces, including soldiers, police officers, Shiite militias and Sunni tribes, launched a large-scale operation to recapture Tikrit on March 2. Last week, the U.S. launched airstrikes on the embattled city at the request of the Iraqi government.

Recapturing Tikrit is seen as the biggest win so far for Baghdad's Shiite-led government. The city is about 130 kilometres north of Baghdad on the road connecting the capital to Mosul.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seven-year-old California girl gets a 3D-printed arm for $50

TECHNOLOGY

Inexpensive choice ideal for growing youngsters

Seven-year-old Faith Lennox never thought much about putting a prosthetic limb where her left hand had once been — not until she learned she could design her own, strap it on easily and then jump on her bike and pedal away at speeds previously only imagined.

Faith firmly placed her new hand's blue and pink fingers on her bike's left handlebar and took off for a lengthy ride around the Build It Workspace in Los Alamitos, Calif., on Tuesday morning. Inside, just a short time before, that hand had rolled off a 3D printer that built it overnight.

"I don't think we'll ever get her off it," said her mother, Nicole, as she watched her daughter continue to circle the parking lot.

Faith Lennox forms a heart with her 3D-printed hand at Build it Workspace. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The prosthetic represents a breakthrough in small, lightweight hands that are economical and easy for children to use. It weighs only a pound and costs just $50 US to construct out of the same materials used to make drones and automobile parts.

When Faith outgrows it in six months or a year, a replacement can be made just as cheaply and easily, said Mark Muller, a prosthetics professor at California State University, Dominguez Hills, who helped with the design. He said a heavier adult model with sensors attached to a person's muscles would run $15,000 to $20,000.

Faith manipulates her hand without sensors. Instead, as she happily demonstrated after the bike ride, she moves her upper arm back and forth. That in turn opens and closes its blue and pink fingers — "my favourite colours," she noted with a smile.

The oldest of three children, Faith had compartment syndrome when her position during childbirth cut off the flow of blood to her left forearm, irreparably damaging tissue, muscle and bone. After nine months of trying to save the limb, doctors determined they had to amputate just below the elbow.

She had tried a couple of more traditional — and more expensive — prosthetics over the years but found them bulky, heavy and hard to use.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUSIC

Tidal woos musicians

Tidal, the music and video streaming service co-owned by Jay Z, Rihanna, Madonna and other artists, is inviting more performers to join the company and earn equity.

Senior executive Vania Schlogel said late Tuesday that Tidal welcomes more acts. It introduced its new co-owners at a launch event on Monday. Co-owners including Beyonce, Daft Punk, Kanye West, Jack White, Alicia Keys, members of Arcade Fire and Jason Aldean attended the launch.

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, April 2, 2015

A lousy law

THE KOHLER REPORT

Rebecca Kohler

Earlier this week, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which, he says, "ensures that Indiana law will respect religious freedom and apply the highest level of scrutiny to any state or local governmental action that infringes on people's religious liberty."

It sounds nice, like he's just signed a law that says everyone can go to church and not be worried that the government might try to stop them.

This law is anything but nice. In layman's terms, this law says that business owners can choose not to serve customers that offend their religious beliefs. The example that's being most commonly referenced is that a Christian business owner can refuse to serve members of the LGBTQ community because they somehow "infringe on their religious liberty."

I keep looking at the calendar to see if it really is 2015. I keep checking Google Maps to make sure Indiana is in the United States of America — Canada's close ally and neighbour. What is going on here? And why doesn't Pence have a tiny square moustache?

What made this law particularly scary was that Indiana doesn't have any statewide anti-discrimination legislation when it comes to sexual orientation.

So theoretically, it meant that in certain Indiana cities, businesses would legally be allowed to put a sign in their window saying, "No Gays."

This, of course, rings a terrible bell and one can't help but think back to those "No Colored Allowed" signs found until just over 50 years ago in the southern U.S. Has Pence learned nothing from history?

Incidentally, if I came across any store that had any sign that said anyone was not welcome, I'd probably suffer an anger-induced bout of dyslexia and read it as, "Please throw rocks at our window."

The backlash to the law was refreshingly harsh: Connecticut announced a boycott of Indiana, the band Wilco cancelled a concert there, large business deals that involved the state were put on hold.

I couldn't help but laugh when during an interview with George Stephanopoulos, Pence called this backlash "intolerant." Yes, Mike, people are intolerant of intolerance and thank God for that — on Tuesday, Pence announced that he'd be amending the bill to make it clear that this law was not meant to condone discrimination against the LGBTQ community.

I believe in religious freedoms and liberties. Like how the Federal Court of Canada ruled it was unlawful to force a Muslim woman, Zunera Ishaq, to remove her niqab at her citizenship ceremony. She has every right to practise her religion. But if Ishaq owned a business and refused to serve me because I was not wearing a niqab? Well, that wouldn't be cool.

While I'm glad Pence has chosen to clarify this bill, I'm sad that there's even a bill like this that needs clarifying.

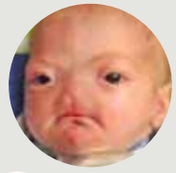
Rebecca Kohler is a standup comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter at @becca_kohler

Happy face/Sad face

From **miracle babies** to **corporate tomfoolery,**
Metro weighs in on the news that made headlines this week:

911 is not a joke

This is not an emergency. We repeat, this is not an emergency: Police in Idaho say a man who called 911 a dozen times complaining about his bar bill is facing a $1,000 fine and up to a year of jail time. The man allegedly made the calls after police gave him a ride home when he got kicked out of Club Tequila. The bar produced a receipt showing he was charged $30 for the 10 beers he apparently ordered.



One in 97 million

Among all the amazing babies that came into the world recently, this adorable little guy deserves a special mention. Timothy Eli Thompson was born without a nose, and guess what? He's doing just fine, having left the hospital this week. In his brief time on planet Earth, he's already made 20,000 friends via his Facebook page. Best wishes to him and his family.

Bad news for bears

In some super bummer news, a study published this week says polar bears forced onto land due to melting ice probably won't find enough food to replace their diet of delicious seals. Apparently the berries, eggs and birds they find on the mainland are no caloric substitute for mammals weighing 150 to 300 pounds each, mostly blubber. The bears love the cute little guys as much as Paul McCartney does.

Rascals!

Nothing like a little skylarking. On April 1, the always hilarious Microsoft launched MS-DOS as a mobile OS, those yucksters at CERN confirmed the existence of the Force, billionaire Lululemon founder and noted comic Chip Wilson posted a building permit for his future helicopter landing pad and uproarious pranksters Netflix launched a PSA on binge-watching. To these, and all the other fools in the world, thank you for the fandango.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Faith is splintering, but it is not dying

It's Easter. So I'm going to take my day off on Friday, and I'm going to church.

I probably won't see you there.

We all know statutory holidays like Easter and Christmas are only religious historically for many Canadians. Your weekend might be more about bunnies and chocolate and ham than celebrating our risen Lord. Correction: my risen Lord.

Religion has been on a downward trend in this country, but a new study shows that the picture is far more complicated than increasingly empty pews.

Faith is splintering, but it is not dying.

While subscriptions to major religions have fallen to 30 per cent from 45 per cent in 1985, the year I was born, we also now have a majority of Canadians straddling the middle ground between belief in a traditional faith, and belief in nothing at all, according to an Angus Reid study released last week.

The 44 per cent of us who consider ourselves ambivalent about religion "consistently seem to be open not only to religious beliefs, but to a range of other non-naturalist beliefs as well, such as psychic phenomena and astrology," the study found.

The finding suggests many of us believe we "cannot live by rationality alone." Which perhaps explains the two-thirds of us who the study found believe in an afterlife and a supreme being.

The study also showed that immigration is boosting the ranks of many Christian and non-Christian religions.

There are one million Muslims, 500,000 Hindus, and 330,000 Jews in this country, plus about 25,500 Pagans, 1,000 Rastafarians and dozens of other small faith groups, according to Statistics Canada data from 2011.

Plus the 22 million who, like me, identify as Christian.

I bet even many of these believers, like me, have what I'd call the personalized approach. For example, I believe in God, and that gay is good and the state has no place barring abortions.

Atheism might have had a pop culture moment, but with only 48,675 of us identifying as atheist, it hasn't sunk our collective sense of faith.

And I don't think it can. There seems to be something innate in humans that drives us to see life as more than this one moment, in this one day. The world seems vaster and more glorious and even more meaningful than its parts.

Belief is not something that we have learned our way out of. We appear to crave faith — in something.

So I'll take my Easter long weekend. And my Jesus in a totally non-ironic way.

And the cute bunnies and chocolate.

Live and let believe.

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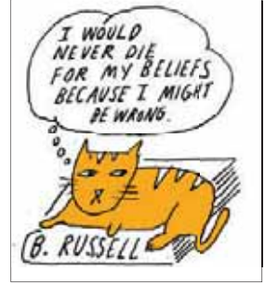

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Tommie-Amber Pirie in Cancon non-rom com Page 21

Franchise holds Fast to formula

FURIOUS 7

Star Vin Diesel says this is the biggest F&F film ever

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse

Tyrese Gibson, left, Michelle Rodriguez, Paul Walker, and Chris Ludacris in a scene from Furious 7. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Furious 7 has already generated its share of column inches from entertainment journalists. The cast has spent the last few weeks doing the junket rounds, talking to everyone with a microphone or a notepad, generating sound bites and stories that have fed newspapers, websites and television shows.

Star Michelle Rodriguez, who plays Letty Ortiz, spoke of getting "pretty crazy" after co-star Paul Walker's death. "I was pushing myself to feel," she said by way of explanation of some of her tabloid-level behaviour in the last year.

Ludacris, who has played technical expert Tej Parker in four F&F films, told the Today Show, "We're about to make history as the most successful franchise of all time."

Vin Diesel has talked about naming his daughter after his friend and co-star Walker — "There's no other person that I was thinking about as I was cutting this umbilical cord" — and made grand pronouncements about the quality of his film.

"Universal is going to have the biggest movie in history with this movie," Diesel said, likely sounding as though he's dragging every word through sandpaper. "It will probably win best picture at the Oscars, unless the Oscars don't want to be relevant ever."

He's likely only half wrong. In 2011 he made a similar award season prediction about Fast 5 and while that didn't pan out, the movie made a fortune, grossing north of $600 million worldwide.

He's right to say that the new film will surely put the pedal to the metal and sell a lot of popcorn. Despite so-so reviews, the Fast and Furious franchise has an EZ Pass to the box office fast lane, grossing two billion plus dollars since racing into theatres in 2001.

"Just because they are for the working class doesn't mean they're not great," Diesel said.

F&F fans enjoy the formula, which can be broken down to essentially this: Swagger interrupted by a snappy one-liner, a wild car chase, a fight scene. Repeat.

The movies aren't Kierkegaard, and that's one of the reasons they haven't run out of gas yet. Over seven entries, they've remained loud and proud, lowbrow and unashamed. They're a wild celebration of muscle cars, muscle shirts and muscle heads.

Like an engorged Hot Wheels set, the films are playthings for the directors — there have been four over the run of the series — who toe the company line time after time offering up a car-crushing stew where sophisticated line readings and nuanced storytelling take a backseat to frenetic editing and in-your-face explosive action. They exist in a world where people only drink Budweiser and bastardizations like Bud Lime don't exist. That purity of vision is the beauty of the series.

Despite the loss of Walker, you can bet Furious 7 won't be the last movie in the series.

As long as the formula works and the money continues to come in fast and furious, Diesel and company won't put these films in the rear-view mirror.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

While We're Young	★★★½
Woman in Gold	★★★
Last Knights	★★½

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★★	SEE IT
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

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Helen Mirren plays the real-life Maria Altmann in Woman in Gold. CONTRIBUTED/ALLIANCE

For director, Helen Mirren is a woman as good as gold

WOMAN IN GOLD

Simon Curtis says the actress was a crucial part of new film

Richard Crouse
Metro | Canada

Woman in Gold is director Simon Curtis's followup to the Academy Award-nominated My Week with Marilyn, which chronicled seven days in the life of Marilyn Monroe during production of the 1957 film The Prince and the Showgirl.

In the new movie, Dame Helen Mirren plays Maria Altmann, a Jewish refugee of the Second World War who flees Austria to settle in the U.S. She enlists the help of young lawyer Randol Schoenberg (Ryan Reynolds) to help reclaim five Gustav Klimt paintings, including one of her aunt, Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I.

Looted by Nazis at the outset of the war, the iconic artwork (referred to as the "Mona Lisa of Austria" in the film) hung in the state gallery for five decades. The case wound its way for years through the courts, until it reached the U.S. Supreme Court and then binding arbitration by a panel of three Austrian judges.

He spent a week with Marilyn, the director teases, but years with Maria.

The story first grabbed his interest when he saw a BBC Imagine documentary on her struggle to reclaim artworks that were rightfully hers. He was taken with the character of Maria, who reminded him of many people he grew up with. "I'm from a Jewish family in London," he says, "and I met many women like Maria."

The resulting film plays like two thrillers — the present day legal story and the backstory — told in flashbacks.

One is a procedural, one a horrifying look at the rise of Nazism in Austria, mixed and matched to form a whole. But Woman in Gold isn't strictly a movie about a lawsuit or Holocaust horror, it's really a story about the power of memories and heritage.

Curtis says the casting of Mirren was crucial to the success of the film. He needed an actress of a certain age and one who could portray the emotional range of a woman trapped between her real world pain and the memories she holds dear. On Mirren's face is the story, a vision of loss and anguish, but tempered with a tale of determination.

Curtis first met Mirren almost thirty years ago when he assistant directed a production of Measure for Measure in 1979. He remembers her as a formidable force and jokingly calls himself "her tea boy."

"I sat with her in the kitchen and helped her answer fan mail and boiled water for tea," he says.

"I did essentially the same job on this film."

SAM HEUGHAN

From Batman to the 18th-century

Sam Heughan has become something of a heartthrob playing a fiery 18th-century Scottish warrior married to a Second World War combat nurse who mysteriously transported back in time in the sci-fi romance Outlander.

The show, which returns to Showcase for its midseason premiere on Sunday, has developed a rabid fan base with as many as five million Americans tuning in to catch Heughan and his kilt each week. The British Film Institute even reports that the show's popularity has inspired a tourism boom in Scotland.

On Heughan's recent trip to Toronto, fans lined up in the cold to catch a glimpse of the handsome 6 feet 2½ inches tall actor. "They were there," he says, "waving flags and supporting us. It is fantastic."

He says "that sort of thing is very new to me," although a recent trip to Comic Con was met with much excitement and on a stopover in Los Angeles, he was recognized for his work on the show.

"On the whole, it is very genuine," he says, "very friendly. They just sort of sidle up next to you and whisper, 'I really enjoy the show. I'm a big fan,' and they'll leave you to do your thing."

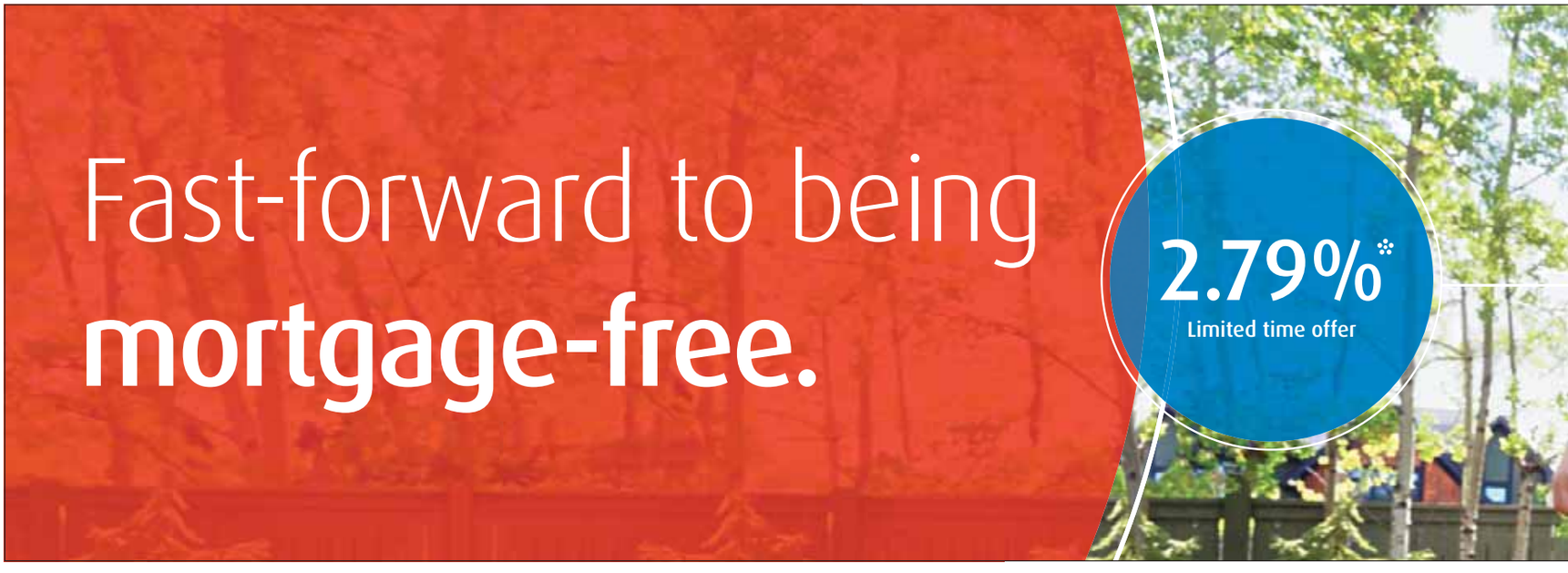
Heughan trained at the prestigious Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama but says before signing on to do Outlander he was a "jobbing actor. I had done a lot of theatre and period drama in the U.K." He cites one strange acting gig in particular, playing the lead role in a touring production of Batman Live, as a real confidence builder.

"A terrific job," he says. "So different than anything I had done before — doing acrobatics, flying across stadiums over thousands of people. It did give me a lot of confidence to stand in front of twenty- or thirty-thousand people and have to fight 30 henchmen every night."

"I'll always remember the first entrance as Batman, flying 200 feet across the auditorium with people below and you're looking down at them thinking, 'This is something else.' They don't teach that in acting school."

RICHARD CROUSE/METRO

Sam Heughan stars in the sci-fi romance Outlander. CONTRIBUTED



Baumbach takes a crack at screwball

INTERVIEW

Director serves up classic comic fare in While We're Young

Ned Ehrbar

Ben Stiller, Noah Baumbach and Adam Driver on the set of While We're Young. CONTRIBUTED

Noah Baumbach's latest film, While We're Young, follows a documentary filmmaker in his 40s (Ben Stiller) and his wife (Naomi Watts) as they go down the Brooklyn hipster rabbit hole with a couple of Bushwick artist-types (Adam Driver and Amanda Seyfried). But in creating an authentically ridiculous hipster world, Baumbach had to be careful not to ape current trends for fear they'd be passé by the time the movie came out.

The natural solution? Just predict what the kids will be into next.

My first question, I guess, is f—ing hipsters, right?

Yeah, f—ing hipsters (laughs). From the time I started writing this script to when we shot it, the notion of hipsters in Brooklyn had already morphed and grown, and things had changed from even when I first started writing it, so I kind of was aware of the fact that to parody this specifically, I was always going to be behind it no matter what. So in a way I kind of made up my own version of it while also using tropes and things that we're all familiar with. The way we went about it was to make it interesting to us. I wasn't sure if people were on rollerblades again yet, but I was like, "Let's just do it, and I'm sure somebody's on them."

You could accidentally be setting the new trends.

Yeah, exactly. "What you all should be doing is rollerblading."

> **I wanted to do something consciously in a more traditional comic structure.**
> Noah Baumbach

With Adam Driver's character, you have a remarkable portrait of a charlatan — a con-artist type. How much of that is in the casting?

There's always going to be that balance, because on the one hand, Ben falling in love with this guy is funny from the beginning even if you don't suspect he's something other than he claims. But definitely casting Adam broadened the opportunity with that guy in that he's so compelling and he's such a physical presence and he's so charismatic and interesting. So it allowed for a lot of flexibility.

This feels very much in the vein of classic screwball comedies, in that it's about a couple re-learning how to be together.

Yeah, comedies of re-marriage. I wanted to do something consciously in a more traditional comic structure, and I was thinking of movies that Mike Nichols made like Working Girl, or Sydney Pollack with Tootsie, Jim Brooks with Broadcast News. These kinds of movies that felt like they were character comedies and relationship comedies, but there was a kind of gloss — and I mean that as a positive thing — element to them.

They had a structure, and they were sort of that era's version of these screwball comedies, which I also love, all those movies. So I was aware of that. I wanted to do my version of that.

CANADIAN FILM

Pretend We're Kissing not another rom com

There's a reason why the creators behind Pretend We're Kissing are insisting the movie not be labelled a romantic comedy.

"They're considered second-rate films for the most part," said star Dov Tiefenbach during a recent interview to promote the Canadian film. "They're kind of considered date flicks or chick flicks, which is even derogatory — like chicks like bad movies. That's kind of sexist, I think."

In truth, however, the "non-rom com" from Toronto-playwright/actor-turned-director Matt Sadowski is reminiscent of such iconic romance films as Annie Hall or the Before Sunrise trilogy. A casual character study, it follows the fleeting fireworks that spark between a bashful would-be drummer (Tiefenbach) and a breezy beauty (Tommie-Amber Pirie of TV's Bitten) seeking a magical connection.

"It changed a lot," admitted Sadowski of the story he crafted a decade ago while cast as one of the costumed characters on cult-hit superhero show Power Rangers S.P.D. "Not to shake a stick at Power Rangers but coming from being a rising writer in the city of Toronto, and then going to do Power Rangers, I felt like I needed to do something more artistic. So I was like, I'm going to write a script, and this was the script."

Sadowski couldn't have predicted it would take 10 years to complete the film (which premiered across Canada on Wednesday) and, in fact, during that lengthy process, he even made another film just to keep motivated: the acclaimed documentary Don't You Forget About Me, an ode to legendary filmmaker John Hughes (The Breakfast Club).

"What I took from finding out about (Hughes) was he really just made films that he wanted to make," said Sadowski.

STEVE GOW/FOR METRO

Fireworks spark between Dov Tiefenbach and Tommie-Amber Pirie in Pretend We're Kissing. ERIN SIMKIN/CONTRIBUTED

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Now playing

ACTION
Furious 7

Director: James Wan
Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker

Continuing the global exploits in the unstoppable franchise built on speed, Vin Diesel, Paul Walker and Dwayne Johnson lead the returning cast of Fast & Furious 7.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 86% Audience: 98%

DRAMA
Woman in Gold

Director: Simon Curtis
Starring: Helen Mirren, Ryan Reynolds

The remarkable true story of one woman's journey to reclaim her heritage. Sixty years after she fled Vienna during the Second World War, an elderly Jewish woman starts her journey to retrieve family possessions seized by the Nazis.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 40% Audience: 90%

DRAMA-COMEDY
Danny Collins

Director: Dan Fogelman
Starring: Al Pacino, Annette Bening

Al Pacino stars as aging 1970s rocker Danny Collins, who can't give up his hard-living ways. But when his manager uncovers a 40-year-old undelivered letter written to him by John Lennon, he decides to change course and embarks on a heartfelt journey to begin a second act.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 72% Audience: 70%

DRAMA-COMEDY
While We're Young

Director: Noah Baumbach
Starring: Ben Stiller, dam Driver

Ben Stiller and Naomi Watts as Josh and Cornelia, a childless New York married couple in their mid-forties. As their other friends all start having children, the couple gravitates toward a young hipster couple.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 83% Audience: 69%

DOCUMENTARY
The Salt of the Earth

Director: Wim Wenders, Juliano Ribeiro Salgado

For the last 40 years, the photographer Sebastião Salgado has been travelling through the continents. He has witnessed some of the major events of our recent history; international conflicts, starvation and exodus.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 94% Audience: 89%

DRAMA
Kumiko, The Treasure Hunter

Director: David Zellner
Starring: Rinko Kikuchi

Rinko Kikuchi stars as a frustrated office worker whose imagination transcends the confines of her life.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 88% Audience: 73%

ROMANCE
Pretend We're Kissing

Director: Matt Sadowski
Starring: Zöe Kravitz

When Benny has a chance encounter with Jordan, a woman obsessed with the notion of fate and a magical kind of love, he may finally have the opportunity to fall in love.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: NOT YET REVIEWED Audience: NOT YET REVIEWED

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HEALTH

Avril Lavigne says she has Lyme disease

Ned Ehrbar

OK, I officially feel bad about all the Nickelback jokes. Avril Lavigne has announced that she's been suffering from Lyme disease since October. "I had no idea a bug bite could do this," Lavigne tells People magazine. "I was bedridden for five months. I felt like I couldn't breathe, I couldn't talk and I couldn't move. I thought I was dying."

But don't worry, Lavigne says she's now "80 per cent" better and has a new outlook on life.

"This was a wake-up call," she says. "I really just want to enjoy life from here on out."

She's been recuperating at her home in Ontario with the help of her mom and her husband, Nickelback front man Chad Kroeger.

The tick-borne disease has symptoms including fever, headache and fatigue.

Singer Joni Mitchell hospitalized in L.A.

Joni Mitchell ALL PHOTOS GETTY

BEL AIR

Folk legend was found unconscious in her home

Joni Mitchell was in intensive care in a Los Angeles-area hospital on Tuesday, according to the Twitter account and website of the folk singer and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer.

"Joni was found unconscious in her home this afternoon," said a statement on the Mitchell website. "She is currently in intensive care undergoing tests and is awake and in good spirits."

It wasn't immediately clear what illness she had.

Los Angeles fire officials said paramedics answered an afternoon 911 call in Bel Air, where Mitchell lives, and took a patient to the hospital. But they could not verify her identity or give details on her condition.

The 71-year-old singer-songwriter told Billboard magazine in December that she has a rare skin condition, Morgellons disease, which prevents her from performing. Still, she released a career-spanning four-disc box set last year and appeared at Clive Davis' annual pre-Grammy party in February.

Mitchell has received eight Grammy Awards, including a lifetime achievement award in 2002. She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997.

Mitchell, who was born in Fort Macleod, Alta., is also a member of the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame.

She started her career as a street musician before moving to Southern California, where she became part of the flourishing folk scene in the late 1960s.

Mitchell has released 19 original albums, the most recent in 2007. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE DAILY SHOW

Aasif Mandvi stands up for Trevor Noah

Longtime Daily Show correspondent Aasif Mandvi says he doesn't understand the recent fuss about future host Trevor Noah's Twitter account.

"I think it's much ado about nothing," said Mandvi while speaking as part of the LinkedIn Discussion Series at the company's New York headquarters on Tuesday. "The guy made some off-colour, irresponsible tweets, but he was trying to be funny."

As for fans of the show who were hoping that Mandvi himself would be tapped to fill Jon Stewart's shoes: The 49-year-old actor insists that he never wanted the job.

"I think they wanted someone who was a new fresh face," he added. "I don't know Trevor, I've met him a couple of times and he seems like a nice guy. I trust Jon Stewart and Jon seems to want him."

LAKSHMI GANDHI/METRO IN NYC

METHOD ACTING

Jamie Dornan walks the stalk

Fifty Shades of Grey star Jamie Dornan is quickly learning that there are some things better kept to yourself during interviews. Like the fact that while prepping for his role as a creepy serial killer in BBC series The Fall, he got some hands-on experience in stalking. "The first (season), I did a couple of things to try and get inside (my character's head)," he tells the Los Angeles Times.

"I did ... can I get arrested for this? Hold on ... this is a really bad reveal — I like, followed a woman off the train one day to see what it felt like to pursue someone like that. I really kept my distance and I was aware, it was kind of half-hearted, 'cause I was going like, 'If she turns around, is she going to notice?' She got off a few stops earlier than I was planning so I was like, 'All right, I'll have to commit to this here.'"

He then followed her several blocks, which is certainly not creepy at all, right?

"It felt kind of, like, exciting in a really, like, sort of dirty way and I'm sort of not proud of myself. But I do honestly think I learned something from it, you know, just 'cause I obviously have never done anything like that in my life, so it was intriguing and interesting to sort of enter that process of like, what are you following her for and what are you trying to find out?"

So would you mind terribly if you turned around to discover Jamie Dornan was following you home? I mean, for purely professional reasons?

NED EHRBAR/METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

Jamie Dornan

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Spring storage solutions Page 34

Mirroring the neighbourhood

CONDOMINIUMS

Unique designs pay homage to history of building sites

Megan Haynes
For Metro

When Roland Rom Colthoff, director of Toronto-based architecture firm RAW Design, was asked to work on a midrise condo near Halifax's port, his team noticed the neighbourhood was replete with shipping containers. So they incorporated the containers into the building's design.

Shipping containers

The shipping containers (visible on the side of the building) celebrate, rather than conceal, the industrial heritage of the neighbourhood, he says.

"We didn't want to say 'Oh, don't worry, it's industrial, but you'll have a lovely house,'" he adds. "We wanted to say, 'It's industrial and you'll have a great place to live and show off your pride as a Haligonian.' (Condo buyers) can say 'I'm part of the port. I'm part of the community.'" The 142-unit building, expected March 2016, has sold out.

Southport is one of a number of new or recently built midrise buildings across Canada that pay homage in a unique way to the space on which they have been built, in a bid by architects and developers to create a sense of community among residents, and stand out in a crowded market.

Just look at Vancouver's King Edward Green development, which incorporates the famed Hobbit House (a picturesque fairy-tale house built in 1942) into its two-building midrise. Developer David Mooney says when a site has so much character, builders simply "have to find a way to preserve it. It shows we care about history and our heritage."

> **It shows we care about history and our heritage**
> David Mooney

The Stradbrook in Winnipeg is wrapped in glass shingles to reflect the surrounding wood-shingled houses. CONTRIBUTED

Shipping containers are incorporated in the design of the Southport midrise condo in Halfax. CONTRIBUTED

All units of the Tree House in Toronto face the courtyard to encourage interaction with neighbours. CONTRIBUTED

Glass shingles

That's not to say a condo has to conform to its historical roots to be a contextual fit for a neighbourhood, says Sasa Radulovic, founding principal and architect at Winnipeg-based 5468796 Architecture. He points to the Stradbrook midrise in Winnipeg that he and his firm worked on. Surrounded by historic wood-shingled houses, Stradbrook is wrapped in glass shingles, paying homage to its neighbours in a modern way. It creates a mirrored panelling, letting the building literally reflect its surroundings. Another 5468796 unit in Toronto features zig-zagged townhouses, meant to mirror the neighbouring suburb that, when viewed from above, looks staggered like a staircase. At the Tree House development (currently in pre-sales), all the units face the courtyard, which is meant to encourage neighbours to interact, he adds.

Condo buildings are not isolated, adds Tudor Radulescu, architect and principal at Montreal-based Kanva. Buildings (and their inhabitants) are part of neighbourhoods, and they have to be woven into the urban fabric, rather than work against it.

Perforated steel

He points to a project completed in 2012 in a former Montreal industrial neighbourhood, which used to specialize in steel manufacturing. To pay tribute to that heritage, and to the two-storey building's recent life as a movie and TV studio, the architects wrapped the four-storey extension in perforated steel, to give the building the illusion of a curtain.

Effectively, it fits and it's nice to live somewhere that fits, he says.

"People are realizing they can buy a condo and it doesn't have to be an anonymous 40-storey tower where you (only meet neighbours) when taking the elevator," says Rom Colthoff. "They don't want to buy square footage. They want to buy into a community."

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What they're a$king

This week we look at pre-construction and new two-bedroom condominium suites in and around the downtown core. Buying a new condo from floor plans is a great way to save money and realize a profit down the road.

Duncan McAllister FOR METRO

OUR CITY

VANCOUVER

$485,900

The Park Metrotown by the Intergulf Development Group is located steps from Bonsor Park and the Metropolis in the heart of downtown Metrotown, a suburb of Vancouver. A two-bedroom condo in this building goes for $485,900. The condo, designed by Chris Dikeakos Architects, is under construction with a fall 2016 move-in date. Contact the sales centre at 604-936-1888.

TORONTO

$635,000

This sum gets you a two-bedroom, two-bathroom unit in downtown Toronto. Casa II is located at 42 Charles Ave., south of Bloor Street. The suite sits on the 33rd floor and has 763 square feet of interior space and a wraparound balcony that provides an additional 309 square feet of outdoor space. Contact listing agent Alex J. Wilson with Royal LePage Supreme Realty at 416-535-8000.

CALGARY

$492,900

Smith is a boutique, 129-unit highrise and townhome development by Grosvenor. Designed by award-winning BKDI Architects, the 18-storey building is located in the desirable Calgary Beltline neighbourhood, near 17th Avenue, Calgary's retail and entertainment district. The G Plan starts at $492,900 for a two-bedroom, 855-square-foot suite that includes one parking stall. Contact the presentation centre at 403-264-1703.

WINNIPEG

$269,900

Glasshouse Lofts is a new condo at 311 Hargrave St., in the SHED (sports, hospitality and entertainment district) of downtown Winnipeg. Designed by Stantec Architects, the condo is currently under construction and occupancy is slated for spring 2016. With 21 storeys and 200 loft-style suites, the building has a selection of two-bedroom layouts available, with a 626-square-foot floor plan that starts at $269,900. Contact the sales centre at 204-282-9658.

EDMONTON

$392,000

The Fox One highrise condominium is a new project by Langham Developments currently under construction in downtown Edmonton. A two-bedroom, 940-square-foot suite will run you $392,000. This tower with 142 suites and 33 storeys will rise above the northwest corner of 102 Avenue and 104 Street in Edmonton's rejuvenated downtown and boasts a walk score of 98. Contact the sales centre at 780-425-0369.

HALIFAX

$339,900

Southport is a sleek, new midrise condominium located where the city's historic South End meets the Port of Halifax. This is Urban Capital's first project out east, in partnership with Killam Properties. Located at 1057 Barrington St., the building has 142 units on six storeys. The largest unit is a 902-square-foot one-bedroom plus den, which goes for $339,900. Contact the sales centre at 902-456-5727.

OTTAWA

$560,900

Minto at Lansdowne is a new condo and townhouse development by Minto under construction at Bank Street and Holmwood Avenue. A 1,124-square-foot, two-bedroom plus den starts at $560,900. The project consists of two highrise towers and several townhomes located in historic Glebe. It has a total of 230 units and is scheduled for completion in 2015. Contact the sales centre at 613-788-2784.

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Putting the fun in Easter

Make the most of your Easter celebration by preparing a brunch table with a few easy, handcrafted items. "A couple of special touches will make it feel like a more special gathering," says Taryn Mohrman, senior lifestyle editor at Woman's Day magazine. She recommends keeping things simple, adding only one or two decorative items to the table. And pick projects you'll enjoy. THE ASSOCIATE PRESS

EGG-CITING CHICKS

Edibles

Woman's Day suggests turning deviled eggs into cute chicks; a plateful helps decorate the buffet table.

Cut off the top third of each hard-boiled egg, removing the yolk from the bottom two-thirds and following one's own deviled-eggs recipe. To assemble the chicks: Slice a thin piece from the bottom of each egg white to help it stand upright. Then, using a 1-inch cookie scoop, scoop the yolk mixture into each egg white and cap it with the reserved top third of the egg, like a hat. Use thinly sliced carrots as feet, wings and beak. Use capers for eyes, and herbs for beards, hair and eyebrows — gently placing each in the yolk mixture to make silly faces.

"I think (children will) have a lot of fun giving each egg their own personality," says Mohrman.

WHEAT GRASS

Centrepieces

One suggestion in the April issue of Woman's Day is that kids place wheat grass (bought at a garden centre) in a shallow dish and decorate it with wheat grass spring flowers, such as tulips and grape hyacinth, along with dyed Easter eggs.

The magazine used several medium-size, square vessels from The Container Store, and ensured that the cut flowers would last longer by sticking each stem in a water pick, or little tube (available at florists or crafts stores).

"The fresh-cut flowers look like they are growing out of the grass," says Mohrman. "I just love that it's a shrunken-down garden."

FUN BUNNIES

One simple project from FamilyFun's April issue: Use an oiled chopstick to pierce lengthwise through a marshmallow bunny, and then insert a straw for serving with milk.

GOLDEN HARES

Place cards

For a simple project, Woman's Day suggests painting small rabbit figurines in gold. For each place card, cut two 1 3/4-inch circles from card stock; write a guest's name on one circle. Glue a 4-inch length of thin gold wire between the two circles. Attach the other end of the wire around the rabbit like a collar.

"It looks like a floating balloon, which is playful and cute," says Mohrman. "You can swap out names next year or reuse the same ones."

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Ideas for living in a small space

INTERVIEW

Designer Casey DeBois has big ideas on tiny living

Living in small spaces is nothing new for city dwellers, but with the growing popularity of micro-apartments, the need to use space efficiently is becoming more and more necessary.

We spoke with Casey DeBois, an interior designer based in New York City — the American capital of tiny apartments — to get some tips on optimizing a small space. DeBois, who works with interior design service Homepolish, has experience working in spaces that measure a mere 400 square feet (pictured above), so you can bet when it comes to tiny living she's got some big ideas.

Making the most of 400 square feet. CONTRIBUTED

What's the biggest challenge with small spaces?

The biggest issue with small spaces is trying to avoid filling it up with "stuff." Small spaces benefit from furniture that scales the space better.

Some vendors like Restoration Hardware, the scale of their furniture is very big, and people often buy their stuff and put one of their nightstands beside their bed and it takes up so much space.

Whereas other vendors such as CB2, their furniture scale is smaller.

Also vintage pieces tend to be smaller in scale.

What design tips can help make a space feel larger?

Sometimes mirrors help, and again with scale. If you have a small space, I wouldn't fill (a wall) up and make a busy gallery wall. I would rather have one large-scale piece of art. Also, area rugs — oftentimes people get rugs that are maybe too small for a space but bigger is better there. In filling the space, a bigger carpet or rug makes a room feel full, but it also visually just looks nicer.

Using vertical space is really important, too, because when you have not much storage (if you can't expand widthwise) the only way to get more space is up. So whether you do shelves or bookcases, you can maximize the space that way as well.

What role does lighting play in small spaces?

Lighting helps, but in a lot of apartments you're limited to whether or not the ceilings are concrete. In most quick-rise buildings they are, so in that case you just have to be a little more creative: Floor lamps (but I would use those sparingly, because those also take up a lot of space on the floor), and wall sconces are really nice. You can also always do track lighting on the ceiling.

Do you have to sacrifice having personal belongings?

It depends. When I was in fashion school, one of my friends ... would keep her shoes in her stove because she never used her stove. It's kind of like make due with what you have. With small spaces I often "hack an IKEA unit" so if you have a pre-existing nook on a wall (you have to think) "How do I maximize this space?" Oftentimes we put in larger wardrobe units and personalize them with custom hardware.

MATT LEE/METRO IN NYC

NATURAL LIFESTYLE

From seed to table: How to grow your own veggies

Dream of growing your own tomatoes or zucchini one day? Well, you don't have to wait for a home with a backyard.

"You can easily grow vegetables and greens in an apartment or urban setting," insists natural lifestyle expert Sophie Uliano. "A lot of people think, 'I haven't got any room.' Well, fire escapes, balconies or even a nice, sunny windowsill is perfect."

Uliano, who grew up in the bucolic English countryside before moving to Los Angeles, recommends city dwellers start with these:

Growing your own vegetables and greens is easy when utilizing your apartment's windowsill, balcony or even fire escape. ISTOCK

Cherry tomatoes

"They're fun to grow and they grow really quickly," she says. "Spring is the time to plant them, so you can start (soon)." And if you really want to wow friends at your next get-together, the green expert says pot some basil, too. "Add in mozzarella and you've got little hors d'oeuvres — and you've grown them."

Herbs

"If you buy fresh herbs, they're very expensive. And they come in little plastic packets that don't last very long," says Uliano. Plus, she explains, you hardly ever use the bag up. "You might just need a few leaves for a recipe. So the beauty of growing things like this is you pick just what you need."

Greens

"Baby lettuce or micro-greens in stores like Whole Foods are super expensive," stresses Uliano. "I love growing greens like arugula because it grows very quickly and you just snip the leaves off, put them in your salad, and they'll regrow. It's the gift that keeps on giving."

TINA CHADHA FOR METRO

PARENTING

Lobbying for family-friendly cities

A small but growing number of parents is bucking a trend when it comes to raising their kids: Rather than move to suburbs as their parents once did, many are opting to stay in or near downtown.

Some do it to seek an urban lifestyle, shorten commutes or be within proximity to restaurants, museums and other attractions.

Along the way, they're pushing cities to be more welcoming to families. Parents in cities across the country, including Seattle, Minneapolis and Denver, are banding together to advocate for new downtown schools, more playgrounds and more affordable family-friendly housing.

"The benefit of living in the city so far outweighed what we would get by moving out to the suburbs," said Jenny Kelly, 32, a marketing consultant who helped form a parents group in 2013, now called Parents for a Better Downtown Seattle.

She and her husband Michael moved downtown in their 20s and stayed when they had 2-year-old Elea.

Kelly and other parents recently pushed for a public school downtown, and they lobbied to include a playground in a redesign of the city's waterfront.

Seattle offers developers near downtown the chance to build taller if they provide space for a school, though no one has taken up the offer.

Some cities are trying to respond to families, albeit slowly. Portland revised building codes to allow courtyard housing, considered an amenity for families. And Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has pledged to grow her city by 10,000 families.

"Families with children are indicator species about the health of an urban neighbourhood," said Gary Johnson, Seattle's city centre co-ordinator.

For decades, Seattle has had a well-earned reputation as a childless city. In the 1960s and '70s, as more families moved to the suburbs, their numbers in the city dropped.

Children still make up a much smaller percentage of Seattle's population, compared with the rest of the state or the U.S., but recent trends suggest Seattle is doing a better job of holding onto those kids, according to Sightline Institute, a Seattle-based think-tank .

"We seem to be closing the child gap," said Eric De Place, the group's policy director.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Justin Ryan (left) and Colin McAllister star in Cabin Pressure. CONTRIBUTED

Bring the cottage into your home

COTTAGE LIVING

Cabin Pressure stars Colin and Justin share tips to spruce up your space

Colin McAllister and Justin Ryan's latest foray into cottage renovation proved significantly tougher than the first.

The Scottish design duo documented their transformation of an A-frame log cabin in "essentially good condition" in the debut season of Colin and Justin's Cabin Pressure. The series airs Sundays at 9 p.m. ET on Cottage Life.

Season 2 sees the pair renovate a tiny rustic lakefront property in Haliburton, Ont., which Ryan described as a "really rough fixer-upper."

"We had to deal with every type of problem you could imagine," he said. "Everything went wrong. The house had been infested by every type of entomological creature.

"We found dead mice. We found dead beavers. We found dead animals everywhere. Pigeons, birds, the lot. Raccoons, everything.

"However, we love the challenge more than anything that we do in our professional lives. We love the drive to beautify."

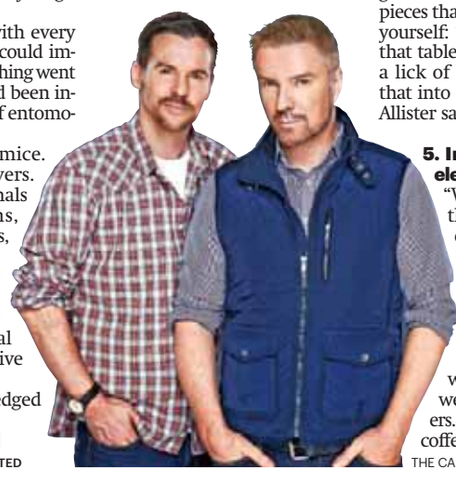
The duo acknowledged that not everyone wants or aspires to live in cottage country. But McAllister and Ryan said there are decorative tips homeowners can apply to their homes away from home, as well as city dwellings.

1. Clean house

"Get rid of the things you don't like, things that annoy you, things that are broken. You're never going to use these items," said McAllister.

2. Create a design plan

"The mantra we say time and time again: to fail to plan is to plan to fail," said Ryan. In addition to having a budget and list of tasks that need to be accomplished, he suggested combing magazines or watching TV for creative inspiration, then assembling a mood board to help zero in on a design direction.



Colin McAllister and Justin Ryan. CONTRIBUTED

> **Get rid of the things you don't like, things that annoy you, things that are broken.**
> Justin Ryan

3. Seek out vintage finds

Ryan said garage sales and thrift stores are ripe sources for items that can be reinvented. "We find amazing things that we can repurpose, and I think that's what it's all about for us."

4. Transform existing pieces

Items that seemed destined for the dumpster could have a second life, provided homeowners are willing to use a little imagination — and some elbow grease. "You can then look at the pieces that remain and think to yourself: 'OK, maybe I can use that table in that room. Maybe a lick of paint can transform that into something else,'" McAllister said.

5. Incorporate natural elements

"We've used birch bark that we've found lying on the forest floor. (When) framed, it looks gorgeous," said Ryan. "We've found old pieces of timber lying in the water, like driftwood, that we've brought in that we've mounted on casters. Hey, presto! An instant coffee table.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Weekend getaway style

Whether it's a lakeside house or a cabin in the woods, everyone loves to escape the city in the spring. Whatever your preferred retreat, a guest or family room is the perfect place to create that home-away-from-home feeling. **KARL LOHNES** FOR METRO

GRAIN POWER

Into the woods

Simple, rustic and natural are the elements that remind me of a cabin in the woods. Recycled, hand-painted and finishes with a patina set the tone for cabin chic.

Basic elements create stylish storage in the cabin. Rus wall shelf, $69, UrbanBarn.com

Faux wood print napkins and tablecloth, from $5, Simons.ca

Anchors away! Burlap cushions with anchors, $30, Homesense.ca

Rope knot table lamp base, $150, PotteryBarn.com

SPLISH SPLASH

Waterside

Think navy, white and sand incorporating motifs of rope, green glass and whitewashed everything to create a bright and casual environment.

ALPINE AWAY

Mountain high

From summer chalets to lodges, there's a grandeur in stone fireplaces, hunt club trophies and leather furnishings surrounded by mountain views and babbling brooks.

ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

Horn-inspired dinnerware. Ralph Lauren's Gwyneth 5-piece dinnerware, $150, TheBay.com

Even the deer get dressed up for a visit to the chateau. Mr. Wapiti kitchen towel, $14, Simons.ca

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PLATINUM PROJECT MARKETING

Store it with style

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes

The time for spring cleaning and organizing is upon us. Like me, you may have accumulated more than you thought over the long winter months. Here are some fashionable and useful ways to store treasures in style.

In the clear

So many ugly packages to deal with. Empty their contents into an airtight container and keep everything in plain, and tidy, view. OXO Pop containers, from $11, CrateAndBarrel.com

Maximize your closet

Keep it organized in those condo dens with an instant closet organizer. Nebula by Bestar 80" storage cabinet, $920, Walmart.ca

Clothes keeper

Add some style to that dirty laundry. Portman faux leather laundry hamper, $99, UrbanBarn.com

Under the mattress

Under-bed storage means up to two less dressers in the bedroom. Drake bed, from $1850, UrbanMode.com

Multi-purpose surface

Rest your feet, eat your dinner and use the storage. Arlington lift-top storage ottoman, $169, BedBathAndBeyond.ca

A natural touch

Warm up the inside of those kitchen drawers with natural bamboo. Variera bamboo flatware tray, $20, IKEA.com

Six simple tips for selling your stuff

SPRING CLEANING

Make money off your unwanted items on eBay

Andrea Park
For Metro

Spring is finally here (supposedly), so it's time to clear the clutter. It's not easy to throw away things you paid a pretty penny for, but you don't have to toss everything in the dumpster.

Suzanne Wells, author of the blog eBay Selling Coach, started her selling career after she got divorced and lost her job in 2003; she started selling kitchen and home items, children's clothes and toys. Now, she's a top seller on eBay and supports her family with the money she makes. Wells shared her tips on how beginners can turn their trash into treasure.

Don't throw out your broken goods

"There's a lot of repurposing," says Wells. "Things that are broken or vintage that don't look so great can be refinished or redone in such a way that is desirable."

And Wells advises dividing and conquering. She gave one shocking example about Keurig coffee makers. "The water tank itself will sell for $20; the lid to the water tank will sell for $10 and the carousel stand that holds the coffee can sell for $30," says Wells. "Things in the kitchen cabinets that look like a jumbled mess are highly desirable… especially if it's an older model because they may not make it anymore. People go to eBay and find the parts they need."

You can list parts from other kitchen wares, computers, electronics and old game consoles.

Check completed listings to set a price

Wells says not to base your price on current listings, but completed listings, so you can see the price at which similar items sold.

Use the "Buy It Now" option

Auctions are the way to go if you want to get rid of something fast, but Wells says you'll get the most money if you select the "Buy It Now" with a "Best Offer" option.

Not only will you have the benefit of having your listing up for a longer period of time, ensuring you get more eyeballs on your item than in the seven-day time frame of auction listings, but you will also have your item show up on Google when you have a 30-day "Buy It Now" listing. Wells says if you know from past listings that it is possible to sell your item for a certain price, you should use "Buy It Now" to wait for the right buyer.

Use the "Best Offer" option

Wells says the "Best Offer" option is like a "reverse auction" because it gives wiggle room for buyers to haggle.

"I tell sellers, 'Price your item 20 per cent more if you're putting in Best Offer; there are a lot of people where negotiating is part of how they buy things, and if you don't have Best Offer, they may not want to buy anything from you at all.'"

Wells also advises not to set up the auto-decline function for offers that are too low.

"If you list something for $40, and someone offers $39, the auto-decline will turn that down and close that door," she says. "You might be more flexible if someone is buying several items."

What you consider trash may be someone's treasure on eBay — and that means money in your pocket for your old things.

Take great photos

Present things in the best light. "The computer screen is the only thing you've got between you and your buyer," says Wells. "It should be clear, cropped in tightly. eBay estimates that 25 to 40 per cent of sales are made on mobile devices. If the picture is not clear or it's not cropped in tightly, it's hard to see and mobile buyers are impatient. They don't want to zoom in and try to see what you're selling."

Choose your words wisely

Two things to keep in mind when writing your listing title and description: use words that describe the item, and use keywords buyers may be using in search terms.

"They say the first six words are most important — so think of the brand name, colour, size and the most important words that a buyer would search for."

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Serena Williams won her 700th match, topping Sabine Lisicki at the Miami Open

Thursday, April 2, 2015

Resilient Canucks visit Hawks

NHL

Vancouver has chance to inch even closer to a playoff spot

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

With all the Vancouver Canucks went through in Nashville — self-inflicted damage included — it would not have been shocking had they eventually succumbed in a loss to a 100-plus-point opponent and hopped on a flight to Chicago.

But the resolve they showed against the Predators in a thrilling, eventful and controversial 5-4 shootout win has pushed them to 95 points, that much closer to a berth in the upcoming Stanley Cup playoffs as they get set to face the Blackhawks on Thursday in the third game of this four-game road trip.

There was plenty working against the Canucks in Nashville.

They had two players — Kevin Bieksa and Alex Burrows — ejected at the same time late in the third period and needed a five-minute-long penalty kill to help get the single point. Burrows escaped suspension for his major penalty for interference on Paul Gaustad.

Eddie Lack wasn't at his best until it mattered the most, late in the third period, overtime and the shootout. Around town, the talk has shifted from whether Lack can handle the duties of being the No. 1 goalie to when would it be appropriate to give him a rest.

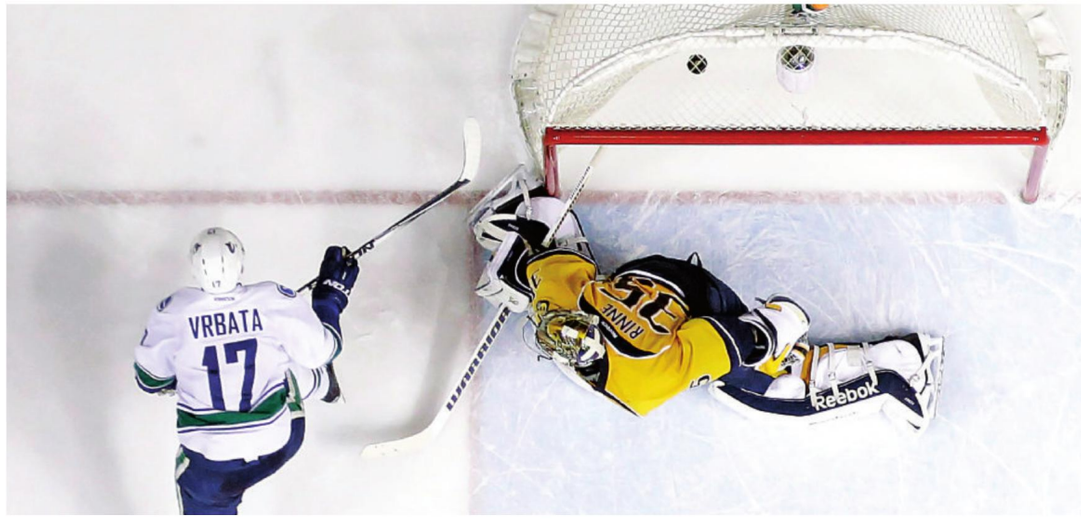
It's difficult to imagine resting him until the Canucks have secured a playoff spot.

There have been times when the Canucks of 2014-15 have shown considerable resiliency. And it has typically come after poor or disappointing results, and against some of the league's best teams.

That was absent pretty much from January through to April of last season.

They're now four points clear of the Calgary Flames and seven ahead of the L.A. Kings for second in the Pacific Division.

The Blackhawks, Thursday's opponent, are 7-3 in their last 10 games.



Canucks right-winger Radim Vrbata scores a shootout goal on Predators goalie Pekka Rinne in Nashville, Tuesday.
MARK HUMPHREY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4

The Canucks will complete the regular season with a four-game homestand after road games in Chicago and Winnipeg on Thursday and Saturday, respectively.

Steven Beitashour GETTY IMAGES

MLS

Whitecaps need to be 'more careful' against Galaxy

For the first and only time during the regular season, the defending MLS Cup champion L.A. Galaxy will play at BC Place Stadium.

No longer with Landon Donovan, who retired after last year's title, the Galaxy has won only once through four games to start the 2015 season. The Vancouver Whitecaps have won three times — all on late winning goals well into the final stages of the second half.

The two teams clash in a Western Conference matchup on Saturday.

Against Portland last weekend, the Whitecaps were guilty of allowing too many good chances on goal and fortunate to come away with the full three points.

A Galaxy squad that still employs Robbie Keane, who finished third in MLS with 19 goals last season and has scored twice on eight shots already in 2015, would almost certainly make a team pay for similar or recurring mistakes.

"I definitely think they'll punish us if they get as many chances as Portland did," said Vancouver's veteran defensive back Steven Beitashour. "Portland was a little unlucky on some chances. (David Ousted) made a couple great saves.

"We've got to be more careful against L.A. We can't be doing the same thing we did last weekend and expect to get a victory."

CAM TUCKER/METRO

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CURLING

Simmons bounces back from sole loss

Canada's Pat Simmons rebounded from his first loss at the world men's curling championship by winning a pair of games Wednesday, locking up a spot in the Page playoff 1-2 game in the process.

Simmons beat Switzerland's Marc Pfister 8-4 in the morning draw and topped Scotland's Ewan MacDonald 7-1 in the evening. The Canadian team of Simmons, third John Morris, second Carter Rycroft and lead Nolan Thiessen will take an 8-1 record into the final day of round-robin play Thursday.

"I'd say we're playing a good A game," Morris said. "But we want to get to an A-plus game."

Defending champion Thomas Ulsrud dumped Jiri Snitil of the Czech Republic 12-5 to join Canada in a first-place tie and secure the other 1-2 game berth. Ulsrud and Simmons will meet Friday night with a spot in the final on the line.

Pat Simmons THE CANADIAN PRESS

The third and fourth seeds will meet in Saturday's 3-4 game with the winner to advance to the semifinal against the loser of the 1-2 game. The semifinal winner will play for gold and the loser will play for bronze.

The medal games are set for Sunday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Jays' Hutchison appears to be ready for Bronx stage

Drew Hutchison wondered two years ago if he could pitch effectively again. No need to worry any more.

Hutchison tuned up for his opening-day start at Yankee Stadium Monday by pitching three scoreless innings Wednesday in the Toronto Blue Jays' 9-7 win over a Boston Red Sox split squad.

"My arm is good," said Hutchison, who missed the 2013 season after a Tommy John operation. "I had the surgery just over two years ago.... Now I am healthy."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flyers get best of their interstate rivals in Pittsburgh

Brayden Schenn scored twice, Vincent Lecavalier added his first goal in nearly three months, and the Philadelphia Flyers had little trouble with the injury-depleted Pittsburgh Penguins 4-1 on Wednesday night.

Carlo Colaiacovo chipped in a rare goal for the Flyers, who ended a nine-game, road-losing streak. Steve Mason stopped 24 shots for Philadelphia as the Flyers won their seventh straight game in Pittsburgh.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Krzyzewski adapts to one-and-dones

NCAA BASKETBALL

Duke's Coach K has fostered five freshman departures

There was a time when Duke's Mike Krzyzewski led Final Four teams built around players who stayed for years to grow into tournament-tested veterans.

No longer, not in today's one-and-done world in which top players rarely stick around long.

The Blue Devils enter this week's Final Four relying on more freshman starters than John Calipari at Kentucky's NBA factory. The Blue Devils have three freshman players who face stay-or-go decisions after the season.

"What Coach K has done in my judgment, and I think Calipari has done the same thing, they've adapted to the landscape, and they are dealing with it in a positive way," said Jay Bilas, an ESPN analyst who played on Krzyzewski's first Final Four team in 1986.

"Now people want to use value judgments to it and say, 'This is not the way it's supposed to be' and 'This is antithetical to college.' Well, says who?"

Mike Krzyzewski GETTY IMAGES

Krzyzewski, the Hall of Famer in his 35th season at Duke and the winningest coach in men's Division I history with 1,016 wins, didn't have a player go pro early for nearly two decades.

Then in 1999, two Blue Devils bolted early: Elton Brand opted to enter the draft after his sophomore season and freshman Corey Maggette became Krzyzewski's first of five one-and-done players.

Luol Deng (2004), Kyrie Irving (2011), Austin Rivers (2012) and Jabari Parker (2014) followed in Maggette's lead.

It has forced the 68-year-old Krzyzewski to adjust his approach compared to the days when Christian Laettner, Bobby Hurley and Grant Hill were four-year guys.

"It actually starts before they get here," Krzyzewski said.

"We try with the kids, especially if they commit early, to develop even a deeper relationship with them than we did 10 years ago. You had time (then). You want to know them even better because you're only going to have them for a shorter period of time."

Duke (33-4) is built around star freshman big man Jahlil Okafor, a possible No. 1 overall pick who chose Duke jointly with point guard Tyus Jones. Forward Justise Winslow is the other every-game freshman starter.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FINAL FOUR

Duke (33-4) vs. Michigan State (27-11), Saturday at 6:09 p.m. ET

Kentucky (38-0) vs. Wisconsin (35-3), Saturday at 8:49 p.m. ET

Jahlil Okafor is one of three Duke freshmen who could make the leap to the NBA after this season. GRANT HALVERSON/GETTY IMAGES

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Cook time: 12

Directions

1. To make the filling: On either a barbecue or a non-stick grill pan sprayed with cooking spray, grill the mushrooms over medium-high heat for 12 minutes, turning halfway or until tender and grill marked. Spray the mushrooms with vegetable spray if they look dry. Slice into thick slices.

2. To make the hummus: In the bowl of a small food processor, combine the chickpeas, roasted red pepper, tahini, lemon juice, olive oil, water, garlic and chili sauce. Purée until smooth. Garnish with parsley.

3. Spread the inside of the pita halves with the hummus. Place half of the mushroom slices in each pita, sprinkle with cheese, and garnish with lettuce, tomatoes and onions.

Ingredients

•3 large portobello mushroom caps, wiped (stems removed)

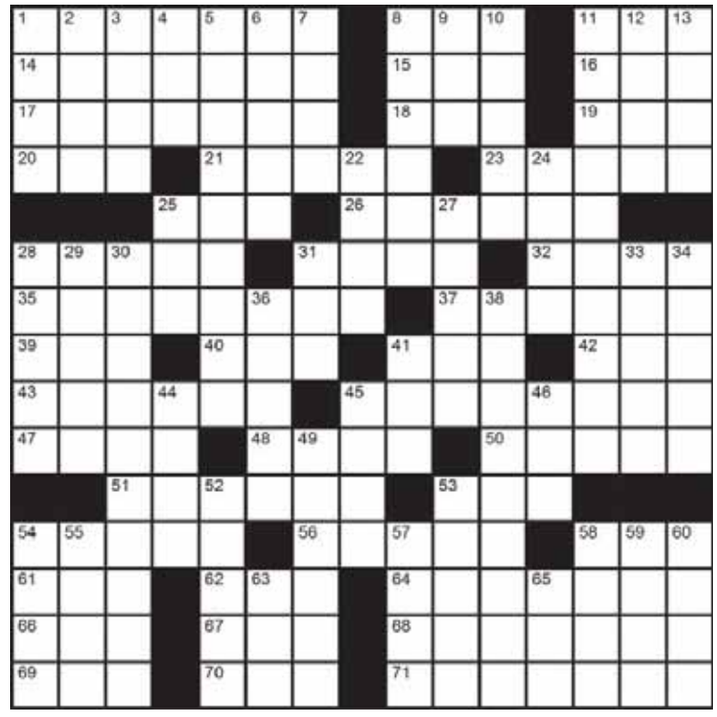
¾ cup Red Bell Pepper Hummus:
- ½ cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ¼ cup roasted red pepper (about ½ small roasted red pepper)
- 1½ tbsp tahini (sesame seed paste)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp water
- ½ tsp finely chopped garlic
- ½ tsp hot chili sauce
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley for garnish

Wraps:
- 3 medium-sized pitas, sliced in half
- ½ cup crumbled goat cheese (2 oz)
- lettuce
- sliced tomatoes
- sliced onions

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ANSWERS ONLINE metronews.ca



ACROSS
1. Ukrainian Easter egg (More at #30-Down!)
8. Texter's polite abbr.
11. Company abbr.
14. Ticklish music keys
15. Fair-hiring letters
16. Lionel Richie's "You __"
17. Measure of quality/excellence
18. South: French
19. "Glee" character
20. 'Meth' suffix
21. Actress Sonia
23. Enroll
25. Guileful
26. Earthy pigments
28. Fleetwood Mac's Christine
31. South Dakota dam
32. Town, colloquially
35. Restaurant kitchen VIP's uniform part: 2 wds.
37. Unclose again
39. __ and Magog (Hostile nations in Revelation)
40. 'To hear' in Spanish
41. Little: French
42. Ms. Zadora
43. Wayward
45. Eggs one day, perhaps
47. Paradise
48. Company dept. heads
50. Abrasive
51. Hangout for grapes
53. Ms. Wray
54. Guitarist Mr. Richards
56. Certain ISP user
58. Grand __ (Wine designation)
61. Cobbler's tool
62. Gossip columnist Ms. Smith
64. Baltimore __ (MLB team)
66. Address book no.
67. Yalie
68. Painted-ceiling Chapel for Michelangelo
69. Poet's 'before'
70. Riddle-me-__
71. Body decorations

DOWN
1. Type size
2. Hockey great Mr. Cournoyer
3. Fish kind
4. Jackie O's hubby
5. Consumes food, bunny rabbit style: 2 wds.
6. "Scandal" star Ms. Washington
7. On the Pacific
8. Passover
9. Mr. Reed
10. As per #8-Down... when The Four Questions are asked
11. The __ __ (Late-1490s masterpiece by Leonardo da Vinci)
12. Unfeigned
13. Red __, Alberta
22. Capricorn animal
24. Biblical mount
25. Wife of Thor
27. Whitesnake's "__ __ Go Again"
28. Janis Joplin's "Me and Bobby __"
29. Something strummed
30. Alberta town which is home to the largest #1-Across in the world
31. Paddle
33. Horseridder's hold-ees
34. Grind teeth
36. Pat Benatar's "__ __ with Your Best Shot" (Trivia! It was written by Canadian musician Eddie Schwartz)
38. Holy Communion
41. Acidity measures, commonly
44. Have __ to pick
45. Prefix that's 'Freezing'
46. Round Table knight
49. Santa Maria delle __ (Milan church where the mural at #11-Down is located)
52. Edmonton Oiler, e.g.
53. Hair dye brand
54. Ms. Hudson
55. Spouted water container
57. Confused
58. Muse of history
59. Vegas alternative
60. Functions
63. Island: French
65. Baseball's Mel

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
The Sun's alliance with Jupiter today means you will come up with a solution to a problem before others even realize that a problem exists. It's an advantage, personally and professionally.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You will say the right thing in the right way today, especially when dealing with people in positions of power. However, you don't need to boast, they will learn over the next few days.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You will find it easy to convince others to agree with you over the next 24 hours, not because you are forceful but because you know what words push what buttons for maximum effect.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Something unexpected will happen today, something that comes at you out of the blue. It may be annoying if it disrupts your plans but you won't be negative about it for long.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You don't need to justify what you believe or what you are doing to anyone. Fortunately, with your ruler the Sun linked to Jupiter in your sign today no one will question you. They simply won't dare!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't wait for others to make decisions for you: make them yourself and, if anyone disapproves, so what? Anyone who thinks you can be intimidated is in for the shock of their lives.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may have no idea how you reach certain conclusions today but don't doubt them for a moment. Your mind is open on a much higher level now, insights are to be expected.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If ever there was a right time to try something new that time is now. You are more adventurous than a lot of people give you credit for. Be bold.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Today's link between the Sun and your ruling planet Jupiter means you can get away with almost anything. No, that is not an invitation to break the law but you can push the boundaries a bit.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The more others say you should be careful the more determined you will be to take some kind of risk. Are you right or are they right? You will have fun finding out.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your confidence in your own abilities today will be on a different level than everyone else. The Sun's link with Jupiter means you no longer know what the word "cannot" means. You can do anything.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you are finding it hard to make up your mind about something then don't force it. Others may be pushing you to make a quick decision but only because it benefits them in some way

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

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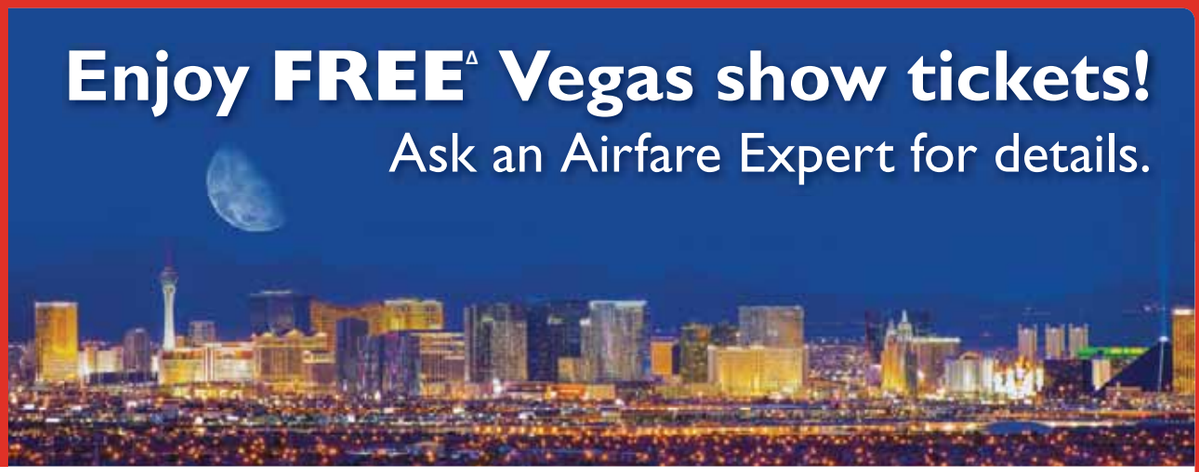

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INCLUDES roundtrip flights into Rome, 2 nights 4-star pre-tour central accom with daily breakfast, 4-day tour visiting Florence, Venice and Montepulciano and 2 nights 4-star post-tour accom with daily breakfast. **BONUS** $100[*] land credit with GOGO Worldwide Vacations included in package price plus also receive price drop protection[*] and a Plaza Premium Lounge pass[*].

Family Getaway

Anaheim Family Special Flights + 4 Nights

from **$475[◊]**

INCLUDES accom in the heart of Southern California near theme parks. Price per person based on family of 4. **ADD** 4-day *Disneyland* Resort *Park Hopper* Ticket from $365/adult, $349/child (ages 5-9).

Local Getaway

Whistler Telus World Ski & Snowboard Festival, 2 Nights + Ski

from **$409**

INCLUDES accom in the Village, 2-day lift tickets to ski Whistler and Blackcomb, Peak 2 Peak Gondola access plus free concerts, ski events and roundtrip deluxe bus transportation from Vancouver.

Inspiration Thursday

Yukon and Northern Lights

Flights + 1- Night + 4-Day Tour

from **$1459**

Named after the Roman goddess of the dawn, Aurora Borealis continues to mystify us with her enchanting light show of green, red, blue and violet dancing across the northern sky. Prepare to be amazed as you witness this fascinating phenomenon in the Yukon Territory. Spend your summer days exploring the "Wilderness City" of Whitehorse, a former gold rush settlement surrounded by mountains, and enjoying optional activities such as hiking, wildlife spotting and indulging in the Takhini Hot Springs. **INCLUDES** all flights, 1-night pre-tour Whitehorse accom near the Yukon River waterfront and 4-day tour experiencing the magic of the Aurora Borealis. **ADD** wildlife viewing and hot springs excursion from $159.

International Adventure

Cambodia

Flights + 2 Nights + 9-Day Tour

from **$2669**

INCLUDES flights into Phnom Penh, spending your first night near the Mekong River in 4-star accom before setting off on a 9-day tour where you will cycle through local villages, discover rare Irrawaddy dolphins by kayak and explore Angkor Wat. Finish off your trip with 1-night post-tour central accom and return flights from Siem Reap.

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